[C16. CONFIDENTIAL FILES 1931 Consular Posts Beirut, Lebanon Volume 473]

[2 of 3]

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL.

BEIRUT, SYRIA

October 3rd, 1931

890

SUBJECT: Elections and Treaties.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

Sir:-

The High Commissioner, M. Henri Ponsot, is expected to return to his post toward the end of this month, and as soon after his arrival as conveniently possible, he will begin his preparations to hold the elections of deputies to the Syrian Chamber, as provided for in the Constitution of the country, promulgated on May 14, 1930. It is hoped that the Chamber so elected (perhaps in December or January) will not lose a great deal of time in electing a President of the Republic with whom negotiations for a treaty will be undertaken immediately. If all goes well, the French member of the Council of the League of Nations will announce to his colleagues, in June of next year, that the treaty has been signed, and that in the year (some three or four thereafter), France will present the candidature of Syria for membership in the Geneva society. But my informant, M. Jean Chauvel, Political Adviser to the Commissioner, warned me that

the

the "if all goes well" was the most important part of what he had to say, and reminded me that successive British Governments had spent many years in trying to make treaties with Egypt.

This, however, is the program, although it has not quite been decided whether the treaty making business is to commence with Syria or the Lebanon. With the latter, the thing would be an accomplished fact in a few weeks. It is tempting to do what is easier, first. But, if this course were adopted, what would be the effect on the Syrian mind? That is what the French are turning over in their heads, and M. Chauvel was of the present opinion (he had thought otherwise) that the effect might be quite undesirable. I hope that he sticks to his present view.

The negotiations will be undertaken with the Syrians on the basis that the country preserve its present boundaries. Any modifications can be made later by Syria and the Lebanon, by mutual agreement, but here, M. Chauvel indicated that there would be certain restrictions on the power of the parties to negotiate. It was his opinion that his Government would never permit the Lebanon to cede Tripoli or Tyre or Sidon to the Syrians, even if the Lebanese, by some miracle, acquired the desire to do so. The communities at Tyre and Sidon were Shiites who hardly loved the Sunnites of Damascus. Why cut off the Lebanon from Palestine just to bring about an undesired Sunni-Shiite marriage?

And

And as for Tripoli, while the majority there would undoubtedly like to be joined with their brethren of the interior, what would happen to Beirut if the thing actually took place? (A French company has the port concession). As to such villages as Kashaya and Hasbaya, if the Lebanese have the political sense to be willing to cede them, (Kashayans and Hasbayans were most disagreeable to Christians in 1925-26), no obstacles will be put in their way.

During the summer, no negotiations have taken place in Paris or here with Nationalist leaders, relative to the new dispensation, and M. Ponsot is spending the present month in interviewing the chiefs and important functionaries of the departments interested so that when he returns he will have a comprehensive idea of what is to be included in the treaty.

As to the Aly Rex scheme, in M. Chauvel's opinion, the Quai d'Orsay is quite indifferent, and, if, after the expiry of three years, the Syrians want to change their regime and put a king on the throne, all well and good. He personally had doubts as to how a republic would work out in Syria, and only time could tell. There were already rather an extraordinary number of candidates for the presidency. But Aly inspires no Gallic interest to compare with that in the future of the Port of Tripoli which Paris is determined shall not be a part of the new Syrian state.

Respectfully

-4-

Respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold
American Consul General

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File 800

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, Oct. 5, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
OCT 7 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

800

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a political

1/ report for the period ending September 30,1931,

I have the honor to be Sir;

always at your service,

very respectfully yours.

Joseph Dabbouss.

800. Dragoman.

Enclosure.

1. Political report.

POLITICAL REPORT
Fortnight ending September 30, 1931.

****

Rumors.

The fortnight under revision was the most active in political rumors since about two years, the newspapers are full with political articles and news about the situation, as well the rumors circulating everywhere and being the individual or circular talk of everybody.

King Feisal.

King Feisal returned from Europe and passed through Egypt where he interviewed Dr. Shabendar and many others as well his Cheif Secretary Rustum bey Heidar made some declaration to the press that was the cause of the activity in rumors.

The Doublefold King.

Rustum bey Heidar while in Palestine made a declaration that it will be possible to unite the Irak State and Syria under one crown , this is based on the fact that if a king is to be elected for Syria there is no one capable to fill this possition except king Feisal of Irak, it is said that this was the finding of Shakib Arslan, Ihsan el Jabiri and Fares el Khoury while in Europe recently, this union between the two states is desired here by the majority of political circles and some newspapers, though it still an embroy, encouraged it and said that if this is realised it will be th e best step this country made since the World War.

Rustom Heidar in Damascus.

This person visited Damascus recently and was visited by a number of notables of the city of Damascus, Afif bey el Soleh made for him a tea banquet in which the situation was discussed, I learned that the opinion of King Feisal is to have no parties as remarking himself and that all the Syrian nation should confromt the forthcoming political creation in one line.

Declaration of Dr, Shabendar.

Dr. Shabendar made a long declaration in the press in which he revised the political situation and as a result he made an inclination toward royalism in Syria if the elected king can gain to Syria some of its political aspiration such as the independence, union of Syria and the termination of the mandate regime and its replacement by a treaty.

The Rebels.

Some of the rebels leaders who are in Aman made a declaration that was published in the press in which they spoke against the Ketleh and its declaration about the republican regime that was declared by Hasham bey el Attasy, they stood for a royal regime and for king Feisal and his family.

The French Opinion.

The French through some of their highest officials made semiofficial declarations in which they denied all facts about royal regime in Syria and that the French are for the republican regime that was chosed by the constituants. In one of the declaration made the French say that they stand for the republic but if the forthcoming Syrian parliment change this article for a royal regime ~~kkxy~~ the mandatory will be with them as to reply their aspiration.

What is in the Sky.

I learned that the Mandatory government here will after the arrival of M. Ponsot prepare for a change in the actual regime by adopting the following steps;

1. General amnistice, for political crimes.
2. changing of the actual government.
3. Carrying out in the country general elevtions for a parlime nt.
4. Fixing of the regime and creating in the country a solid goverment.

Anglo-French Agreement.

I learned that the French government and the British government had in 1927 agreed that they run a policy of cooperation in the Near east in the countries under their mandated and that recently there was a similar agreement for a future cooperation and duplicated polity in Syria and Irak.

Activities of Parties.

The actual status of things now taking place made the circles which like to interest itself about the political situation enlarge itssphere and call for new subsccibers and make nightly meetings.

Omar el Muktar.

The execution of Omar Muktar a certain rebel leader in Tripolitania by the It alian forces made here a large movement of fanaticism among moslem classes, a prayer was made for him in Omayad mosque and the boycottage of everything Italian was preached in Damascus and called for even in newspapers.

M. Solomiac.

M. Solomiac the French delegate in Damascus left for France in a hurry, I learned that he is called there f~~o~~R a conference about the Syrian question that take place on Oct.5,1931. M. Solomiac will return with M. Ponsot at the end of this month.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.

G.

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Nº 95

Aleppo, October 17th, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
OCT 20 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General,

Beirut, Syria.

Subject : Political Situation

Desp. Dept. 10/22/31 File HSG/HI

SIR:

Local papers were busy during the month in discussing and commenting on various political subjects in regard the mandate in Syria, the declaration made by Rustom Bey Haydar, Minister of Finance of Iraq, in connection with a monarchical regime in Syria under King Fayssal, and the speech delivered by the latter in Bagdad after his recent return from Europe.

In the interview which Mr. Lavastre, Assistant Delegate of the High Commissioner in Aleppo, had recently with the representatives of the Press on the occasion of his return from France, this high functionary made in substance the following declarations :

" On his return, Mr. Ponsot will think before all to endow Syria with a congress (House of Representatives) and a constitutional Government which will have legal rights to discuss, prepare and sign a Treaty with France, Treaty which has to be approved by the Congress to be issued from the elections ; the date of the latter cannot be fixed before the return of the High Commissioner.

" After the elections, the legal government, which will be constituted in Syria, will be able to establish with the Representative of the Mandatory Power the clauses of a Treaty which will be submitted afterwards to the Syrian Congress. The terms of this Treaty will not be promulgated nor known before the elections, contrary to the desire of the extremists. It is to the Constitutional Government to elaborate and discuss same, Syria not possessing at present legal representatives able to assume the responsibility of this international act. The application of the clauses of the Treaty will not be immediate. From the international point of view, Syria is still in need of many "Mises au point" before being able to form an independent nation. The League of Nations, in its last session, has made known the conditions which the nations under mandate have to fill before being declared apt for independence. Therefore France will continue to assist Syria during some years more in filling these international conditions, and then it will present it to Geneva to

be

be accepted as a member of the League of Nations. Among these conditions let us note the delimitation of our frontiers with Iraq, the organization of a national army capable of defending our security and our independence etc. These "mises au point" will necessitate a period of 4 years, and if Iraq is admitted in 1932 to the League of Nations Syria will also be in 1936."

The declaration made at Damascus by Rustom Bey Haydar on the possibility of uniting Syria to Iraq in a Kingdom, with King Fayssal as Ruler, seems to have had a favorable echo among the Mohamedan population of Syria. It can also be induced from declarations made to the papers etc. that the Nationalists or Extremists, who are declaring themselves as most inveterated republicans, do not seem to be in reality irreductible to rally to the idea of the creation of the Nucleous of the Great Arab Empire, embracing all Moslems States in the Near East, which they have been dreaming of, provided that some special conditions be insured for Syria. The declarations made by Mr. Fares El-Khouri, one of the leaders of the Nationalists party "THAT WE WILL NOT SELL THE REPUBLIC EXCEPT FOR A HIGH PRICE", can be accepted as an interpretation of the feeling of his Party on this occasion.

The recent speech delivered by King Fayssal at Bagdad, in which he passes in review the phases of his career, with some significant commentaries and severe criticism in regard the past and present situation in Syria, gives the impression, in spite of official denials, that the recent visit of the Iraq Ruler to Paris was not altogether stranger to the spirit of the declarations made by his Chief Secretary and Minister of Finance of his country. Some persons even believe that if France is backing the idea of the unity of Syria to Iraq that is mainly for the Mossoul Petroleum sake. Fayssal, King of both countries, will have interest to be in good terms with the French, and consequently to protect the pipe-line which has also as a terminus point a Syrian port.

Security during the month was complete all over this district, with the exception of the attack of an automobile in the region of Maarra.

I have the honor to be,

SIR,

Very respectfully yours,

LYM/MN.

NO. 107

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

OCT 23 1931

SUBJECT: Elections and Treaties.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

800

SIR:

By way of confirming the statement which M. Chauvel made to me concerning the probable course of events to follow the arrival of M. Ponsot (my despatch No. 87 of October 3rd), I have the honor to forward herewith a copy of

1/ Mr. Manachy's translation of the statement which M. Lavastre, Delegate of the High Commissioner in Aleppo, made on the occasion of his recent return from France.

As a result of an interview given in Damascus by Rustom Bey Haydar, the Finance Minister of King Faysal, in which he rather encouraged the idea, there has recently been an enormous amount of discussion and speculation in the political circles of the three principal cities as to the possibility of Faysal becoming king of Syria and Iraq, a step to Pan-Arabia.

I am

I am rather inclined, however, to believe that the statements of Messieurs Chauvel and Lavastre are a little nearer to reality.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

Enclosure:

Copy of translation of statement made by M. Lavastre.

Distribution:

Original and four copies to the Department.
One copy to E.I.C., American Embassy, Paris.
One copy to American Embassy, Istanbul.

800
HSG:HT

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(Enclosure to despatch No. 107 of H. S. Goold, American Consul General at Beirut, Syria, dated entitled "Elections and Treaties".)

(CORRECT COPY: HT)

(Mr. Manachy's translation of the statement made by M. Lavastre, Delegate General of the High Commissioner in Aleppo)

"On his return, Mr. Ponsot will think before all to endow Syria with a congress (House of Representatives) and a constitutional Government which will have legal rights to discuss, prepare and sign a Treaty with France, Treaty which has to be approved by the Congress to be issued from the elections; the date of the latter cannot be fixed before the return of the High Commissioner.

"After the elections, the legal government, which will be constituted in Syria, will be able to establish with the Representative of the Mandatory Power the clauses of a Treaty which will be submitted afterwards to the Syrian Congress. The terms of this Treaty will not be promulgated nor known before the elections, contrary to the desire of the extremists. It is to the Constitutional Government to elaborate and discuss same, Syria not possessing at present legal representatives able to assume the responsibility of this international act. The application of the clauses of the Treaty will not be immediate. From the international point of view, Syria is still in need of many "Mises au point" before being able to form an independent nation. The League of Nations, in its last session, has made known the conditions which the nations under mandate have to fill before being declared apt for independence. Therefore France will continue to assist Syria during some years more in filling these international conditions, and then it will present it to Geneva to be accepted as a member of the League of Nations. Among these conditions let us note the delimitation of our frontiers with Iraq, the organization of a national army capable of defending our security and our independence etc. These "mises au point" will necessitate a period of 4 years, and if Iraq is admitted in 1932 to the League of Nations Syria will also be in 1936."

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, Oct. 25, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
OCT 27 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

CONFIDENTIAL.

H. S. Goold, Esquire,
American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Dear Sir:

I have the honor to refer to your letter dated Oct. 22, 1931, File No. 800/844, regarding the visits we made in Damascus.

In reply therto I beg to inform you that the first visit we made was to Haky bey el Azem, one of the pro-French elements, and former governor of Damascus, he is the chairman of Hizb el Islah (Islah party).

The second visit we made was to Rida pasha El-Rikabi, Marshal of the Turkish Army, Military Governor of Syria under the Arab regime of King Feisal, Minister and Governor of Transjordania. He is an independant element.

The third visit was to Jamil bey Mardam bey, a diplomate of EL Kitleh Watanieh (Kitleh group, the extremist nationalists) he was not at home. Two days letter I saw his brother in law and gave him the card and reported to him the visit.

The fourth visit made was to Emir Said el Jazaerly, the grand son of Emir Abdulkader, this person of the monarchist party.

The fifth visit was made to Fares bey el Khoury, in whose house was a group discussing the electric boycottage. he is of the Kitleh Watanieh.

The sixth visit was made to Atta bey el Ayoubi, a pro-French element and of the Islah party, former minister of justice. He was not at home and we left card for him.

I have the honor to be Sir,
always at your service.

very respectfully yours.

Dabbouss
Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman

In reply refer to
File No. 800/844
HSG:HT

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA October 22, 1931.

Mr. Joseph Dabbouss,
Bab Touma, Damascus,
Syria.

Dear Mr. Dabbouss:

You introduced me to so many people the other day that I am rather bewildered, and have not got them very well identified in my mind.

My recollection is that we first called on Hakki Bey el Asm, the former Governor of Damascus. But who was the General we called on who had opposed the Ottoman entry into the war and who, I believe, was allowed to resign? Was he Rida Pasha Rikarbi?

Was Faris Bey Khouri the last man whom we saw, in whose house there was a meeting going on, discussing the boycott? Did we actually see Jemil Bey Mardam and, if so, can you do anything to refresh my memory as to circumstances? I, of course, remember the Emir Said Abdel Kader.

Very respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

A true copy of the signed original

800/844 Politics

NO. 111

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,

BEIRUT, SYRIA

OCT 30 1931

SUBJECT: King Feisal.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

Such interest in the probable political future of His Most Excellent Majesty, King Feisal, has been aroused by the reported remarks of Rustom Bey Haydar, the Iraq Minister of Finance, and those of another member of the Sovereign's entourage, that I deem it worth while briefly to set forth the principal points of articles on this subject recently published by "L'Orient" of this city, which I have very good reason to believe were officially inspired. But to begin with, let me repeat exactly what the Finance Minister said:

> "The French Government have approved, in principle, the project of the fusion of Syria and Iraq under the same crown, and they are leaving to King Feisal the business of coming to an understanding with the Syrians for its accomplishment."

He added that M. Ponsot knew nothing of the negotiations which had taken place in Paris between the King and M. Philippe Bertholot.

And

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King Feisal

And now for "L'Orient's" inspired denial: M. Philippe Berthelot had never had a private interview with King Feisal and, moreover, during the summer there had not been any negotiations in Paris or elsewhere on the Syrian question, either with King Feisal or Fares Bey Khouri, the Nationalist leader, or with any other politician from this part of the world. The only conversations which had taken place were those between M. Ponsot and members of the Government departments interested.

I now come to the statement published as being made by the other member of the King's entourage whose identity I do not know. It was as follows:

> "The negotiations which he (the King) engaged in with the French authorities were conducted to the satisfaction of both parties, and have resulted in a happy manner, both for him and for the various countries under Mandate."

As to the truth of this statement, "L'Orient" says that the King is merely an "amiable mystifier". It then sets out to give an account of the two pilgrimages which His Majesty made to Paris during the summers of 1930 and 1931, respectively.

The first time, Feisal went to the French capital quite incognito and spent fifteen long days in a hotel without having any official person "risk the indelicacy of violating his privacy". Official Paris feigned to be quite unaware of his presence. Of course, this excessive courtesy was not at all in accordance with His Majesty's hopes. But realizing that he had no ground for insisting, he did not do so, and left the capital as discreetly as he had come, however, not without laying a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Having

Having failed to break the Parisian ice, His Majesty's sole desire was then to see M. Ponsot. He saw him at Dijon and M. Ponsot invited him to dinner. Before dinner a conversation necessarily occurred, and here "L'Orient", and perhaps the officials of the High Commission who inspired the article, became a little unkind. What was said at this conversation? It was the vague and interminable conversation of a Bedouin, sliding over all the problems, concentrating on none, which only the dinner hour ended, since the French interlocutor being gifted with unextinguishable resources of patience, manifested no sign of fatigue.

Obviously encouraged by the natural courtesy of M. Ponsot, the King insisted on seeing M. Aristide Briand, at that moment in Geneva. His insistence with the High Commissioner and the entourage of the Minister of Foreign Affairs led them to persuade M. Briand, who offerred His Majesty tea in the Hôtel des Bergues. It was an exchange of courtesies, nothing more. The return to Baghdad followed, with enigmatic smiles but no declaration to the press.

This year, His Majesty decided to take certain precautions. Before leaving Baghdad he asked the French Consul General to sound out the Quai d'Orsay to ascertain whether the King of Iraq would be officially received. The reply came that there would be no objection. Feisal was, as a matter of fact, invited by the President to lunch at Rambouillet. The King declared that beside himself and the President, M. Philippe Berthelot was the only person present at the lunch. But "L'Orient" insists that several politicians of note and certain high officials were invited. (Is

the

the word "invited" advisedly used? Were the functionaries and politicians actually present?). However, M. Ponsot was not there, but, at the time, was on vacation in the Alps, and it was some days later that the King and the Commissioner met to have another conversation, hardly more precise or important than that of 1930.

What is Brother Ali going to think about all this fuss, Ali, whom Feisal had jockeyed off the throne of Baghdad? "L'Orient" asks this question in an obviously mischievous spirit, and then goes on to state that there is quite a pack of royalties in the neighborhood, including Abdallah, the Emir of Transjordania, the young and beautiful Emir Zeid, not to forget Prince Adel Ben-Ayad, the Sherif Ali Haydar, the Emir Said Abdel-Kader, and the Khedive Abbas Hilmi. Abdallah is neither meek nor mild. Indeed, rather "guapo", as an Argentine would say.

The article concludes, that Feisal has been rather hurried with his project which (and here I believe one should take careful note), in itself, is not utterly beyond accomplishment and realization, and that His Majesty should have waited two or three years before making his moves. Again, his extreme nervousness has betrayed his interests.

This first article should doubtless have been sufficient to stop discussion of the matter, but such was not the case, and much speculation has been indulged in, both in the press and in conversation, as to whether it was the idea of those shaping the future of this part of the world that Ali was to be the King of Syria while Feisal was to be a sort of King of Kings, or Emperor, uniting Iraq and Syria and Transjordania,

jordania, and through his personal influence, forever bringing to an end Anglo-French rivalry in the Arabic world. There have been rumors of an impending conference between Ibn Seoud and Feisal, and of an excursion of a delegation of Syrian politicians to Baghdad.

And so "L'Orient" returned to the charge and invited the attention of its readers to the fact that during the month of May, 1930, a Constitution had been promulgated for Syria, and that this Constitution provided,

> "Syria is a parliamentary Republic***The legislative power shall be exercised by the Chamber of Deputies***The executive power shall be confided to the President of the Republic***The President of the Republic shall be elected by the secret ballot of the absolute majority of the members of the Chamber***No one shall be eligible for the Presidency who does not fulfil the conditions required for election to the Chamber of Deputies and who has not attained his thirty-fifth year."

"L'Orient" insisted that all this meant that the President must be a Syrian and that the Constitution itself excluded all possible candidates from Iraq, Transjordania, Arabia, Tunisia and other parts of the world. But on examining our copy of the instrument, I merely find (Chapter 2, Article 35) that provision is made that the Chamber of Deputies is to be composed of members elected in accordance with an electoral law to be enacted in conformity with principles formulated in the subsequent Constitutional articles. And these articles, as far as I can make out, do not insist that a deputy be a Syrian national. However, as far as "L'Orient" is concerned, Feisal, Ali et als are excluded by the Constitution (which evidently "must and shall be preserved") all of which is sufficient to explain why M. Briand, who has many more important things to do in

dealing

dealing with the Manchurian situation and the general European situation, has not taken the trouble to tell the Syrian Nationalists precisely what is the attitude of the French Government toward certain royal ambitions.

I believe that M. Chauvel's statement to me (My despatch No. 87 of October 3rd), M. Lavastre's statement on his return to Aleppo from France (My despatch No. 107 of October 23rd) and now these articles gave a fairly accurate view of the existing position, and what is likely to occur after the return of M. Ponsot. Perhaps you will remember that M. Chauvel stated that the French representative at the Council of the League hoped to make a certain statement at Geneva during the month of June of next year, "if all goes well", adding that the "if all goes well" was by far the most important part of what he had to say. There is more than the possibility of trouble in the different interpretation of the nature of the coming elections by the Nationalists and the French. The position of the French is that they are to be legislative elections for the choice of Deputies to a Chamber, provided for by a valid existing Constitution, while many Nationalists consider that they will be elections for a constituent assembly. If, instead of electing a Chamber on the basis of the existing Constitution and, if they so desire, amending the Charter according to its provisions, they take the position that no Constitution exists, and that they have been called on to make one,--they may be right, but I

fear

rom that they will not get much "harder".

Respectfully yours,

H. S. Gould,
American Consul General.

Distribution:

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One copy to American Legation, Baghdad.

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AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, Nov. 3, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
NOV 3 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

H.S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Sir:

I have the honor to attach herewith a short political report about the situation in this district for the period ending October 31, 1931.

I have the honor to be Sir:

always at your service,

very respectfully yours.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

800.
Enclosure,
1. Political Report.

POLITICAL REPORT
Month ending Oct. 31, 1931.

****

Independence of Djebel Druse.

The most important political event that took place during October is the declaration of the Chamber of Deputies in Djebel Druse about the separation of their district from any union with Syria and that they remain independent state under the direct guidance of France.

There was also a petition made by the Druses and signed by important notables such as Abdulgafar pasha Atrash, Hassen Atrash, Moteib Atrash, some of the Halaby family and many others. This petition is to be presented to the French H.C. and contain three demands. 1. The independence of Djebel Druse as a state under the French protection. 2. Demand of a number of villages that are at present in Syrian frontier. 3. Protection of the southern boundary. The second two etems being a shade for the first one which is the most important in the petition.

There is at Djebel Druse a minority which is not of the independent opinion and desire to join Syria. But I learned that the greatest majority of the Druses and christians in Djebel Druse desire no union with Syria at present and their prove is that the Druses do not want to be the fighting army of some extremist Damascus nationalists who lead them toward ruins, the local government in Syria is nothing but a curtain and everything is in the hand of the French therefore is preferable for the Druses to join the French directly from having any go-between.

Moteib bey Atrash made a declaration in the press and stated that the Druse interest at present is to rem ain independent from any union with Syria but whenever Syria will have a strong and powerfull govermmemt the Druses will reconsider the situation.

Rida Pasha EL-Rikabi.

Rida Pasha Rikabi made some activities toward creating what he called a united fromt made up of all the parties now in Damascus, he made a meeting at his house to which he invited notable personages of all the parties, all the invited replied the invitation and came to the meeting with the exception of the invited personels of the Kitleh Watanieh, in this meeting the situation was discussed and Rida Pasha made a speech in which he spoke about his aim of the meeting to unite the parties and form one line of all the nation. A second and third meeting were made but it seems in vain will go the activities of Rida Pasha because of the obstination of the Kitleh to remain alone as a national party.

Three Visitors.

In the first part of October, Rustom bey Haidar, the minister of finance of Irak who was with king Feisal in France, Safwat Pasha Awa, The private treasurer of King Feisal, and Auni Abdulhady a well knownnotable of Palestine who is an asider to Feisal came to Damascus and interwiewd many notables and made some propoganda for the united thrown on Syria and Irak with a common king. Practically they met all the parties and ~~ix~~ discussed the situation with them.

El-Youm.

The Kitleh replaced their stopped newspaper El*Ayam by the El-Youm which is a daily paper and is the organ of the Kitleh and Istiklal Party group.

The Hedjaz Railway.

The Committee of defence of the Hedjaz Railway made a protest against the mandate of the D.H.P. of the part in the French Zone of the Hedjaz line. On last Friday a large meeting was made in the Ommayad Mosque and after which a demonstration was made, the shops and bazaars of the city of Damascus closed for half a day on this occasion.

Fares Bey Khoury.

Fares bey Khoury who is a head of the Kitleh Watanieh and who was in France returned to Damascus but did not yet made any declaration about the situation.

The Boycottage.

The boycottage of the electric lights made some activities in the second part of October. There is also negociations for the ending of this boycottage and recently M. Veebert the Delegate in charge made a go-between between the Electric Company and thepeople.

King Feisal Speech.

King Feisal made a speech in Bagdad in which he mentioned his activities in Syria and criticised the extremists who were the reason of the Syrian problem dificulties to the present time.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.

Copy to: American Consulate General, Beirut

No. 648

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Jerusalem, Palestine, November 14, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
NOV 19 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

Confidential

Subject: Report entitled "Prospects of Zionism".

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose a report prepared by Mr. Jacob Sloan, the Interpreter of this office, entitled "Prospects of Zionism".

Mr. Sloan prepared his report after he had had lengthy interviews with Dr. Alsberg, General Secretary of the Jewish Agency, Dr. I. B. Berkson, Director of the Department of Education of the Jewish Agency, and other officials of that organization. While Mr. Sloan has drawn his own conclusions as a result of these interviews and as embodied in this report, nevertheless he has very largely reflected therein the opinions of these important officials of the Jewish Agency. This fact makes the report of particular interest.

Mr. Sloan shows how and why since the disturbances of 1929 Zionism as formerly conceived has become more or less bankrupt both morally and financially. The rude awakening

which

which Zionism received in consequence of the disturbances has caused dissension within their own ranks. The world at large through the publicity given to Zionism as a result of the disturbances came to realize the difficulties inherent in the attempt to implement the Balfour Declaration, and more particularly the impossibility of giving effect to the aims and policies of Zionism as formerly conceived. The mandatory authorities, though most willing to stick by their pledges to the Jews, finally found it impossible to support the Zionists in a way which would give real satisfaction to them. Moreover, and possibly even most important of all, the non-Zionists who hold the purse strings came into their own, and have succeeded in bringing about a change of policy for the future more in conformity with non-Zionist principles, namely, sound economic development and penetration in Palestine, spiritual and cultural development, and less politics.

Mr. Simon's report shows more or less in detail how the change in Zionism and the present policy in Palestine has been brought about. This new policy, if adhered to, will tend to reduce friction with the Arabs and will be less likely to give cause for further disturbances. This is true at least in theory but it may not prove to be true in actual practice, and the future therefore remains uncertain.

I commend Mr. Simon's report to the Department as an interesting round of the situation.

Respectfully yours,

P. Knabenshue,
Consul General.

Enclosure:
Report.
File No. 600
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VOLUNTARY REPORT

NO. 362

"CONFIDENTIAL"

PROPERTY OF ZIONISM

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From Interpreter Jacob B. Elmon

American Consulate General,

Jerusalem, Palestine.

Date of Completion: November 13, 1931.

Date of Mailing: November 13, 1931.

APPROVED:

P. Knabenshue,
American Consul General.

A true copy of the signed original. CG

PROSPECTS OF ZIONISM.

For two years, ever since the baleful August of 1929, Zionism has been at the crossroads. The aspiration of a national redemption of the rehabilitation of ancient homeland, of a haven of refuge for the Jews who are faced with the prospect of physical and spiritual extinction in Eastern Europe, has been subjected to revision, and a grand conception has been reduced to pettiness. Zionism has become a current topic, a subject of interpretations and dialectics, an object of charges and calumnies. The Zionist movement, its aims, its intentions and its methods, have been brought to judgment before the tribunal of the nations; it has been deflected from its course to the highway of world politics and complicated plays of forces. At a time when Jewry was still stunned and aghast after the first calamity of the disturbances successive Commissions of Inquiry were mustered, which palpated its wounds, and scrutinised it in the light of facts and figures. Fate willed that the crisis of Zionism should coincide with a depression in the political graph of the British Empire; the eve of the India Round Table Conference, a phase of hesitation in colonial and foreign policy, of the courting of the doubtful sympathies of the Moslem World, of the resurrected popularity of the idea of an Arab Federation under British Protection. Ever since the disturbances of 1929, the barometer of Zionism's fortunes has been falling, and Zionism stands assayed and perplexed. The physical disturbances were followed by moral disturbances: the verdict of the majority of the Shaw Commission of Inquiry into the causes of the disturbances, Sir John Hope Simpson's Report on Land Settlement Immigration

and Development, the White Paper of October 1930, on the future policy of the Mandatory Government, the suspension of immigration in May 1930, and other events. The struggle on two fronts, with the Arab leaders and with the Mandatory Government has left Zionism weakened and appallingly forsaken. For the moral support which the League of Nations tendered to Zionism anew the British tightened up the screws.

The attack from without was not long in progress before internal weakness manifested itself: divergencies of opinion, apathy, loss of faith, perplexity of mind, wavering of courage, doubts at decisive moments. Only for a brief space of time immediately after the August horrors did the Jewish people show themselves responsive to the appeal of Zionist realisation, at least materialistically. A mighty movement gave birth to the Emergency Fund for riot sufferers, which collected over half a million pounds in a very short period. The brief phrase of solidarity, however, was followed by the curse of discord.

The Seventeenth Zionist Congress, which was held at Basel last July, took place in the sign of faction and disunion. It was a foregone conclusion that all the pentup feeling of two years of calamities would explode at Basel and that the Congress Hall would be a field of battle among the Zionist groups and parties. Despite appalling material conditions, the cessation of Jewish agricultural settlement, the closing of the gates of the country, the dwindling of Zionist funds, the deterioration of Jewish masses in the Diaspora who are economically ruined, the delegates had no ears for any constructive programme and the many Vows that yawned before the rapporteurs on agricultural settlement

and finance bore eloquent testimony to the mood of the Congress. At a time of ideological crisis and general revision, the impatience with details is intelligible. As a result of a random interview of some journalist with Dr. Weizmann, the question of the ultimate aim of Zionism suddenly became the pivot of the proceedings. For a few days the Congress was torn among conflicting definitions and formulae ranging from "conditions enabling free automonous development" to "a Jewish Majority on both banks of the Jordan and the establishment of a Jewish State." The motives for the demand for a definition of the ultimate aim, were varied. The leader of the Revisionist (maximalist) Xionists, Vladimir Jabotinsky, endeavored to prove from parliamentary documents and diplomatic correspondence that the expression "National Home" in the Balfour Declaration, which was embodied in the Mandate for Palestine, meant "Jewish State," and he championed the policy of making this consummation the declared aim of Zionism and this interpretation the basis of its claims. Other, more moderate, elements demanded a definition of the aim from other considerations, for the sake of restoring the morale of the ranks by telling clearly whither they were being led. In their honest desire to counteract the extreme liquidationist tendencies of a small section of the Movement, these moderates very nearly fell into the trap of another dangerous provocation like that of the Wailing Wall. In fact, the enemies of Zionism were waiting eagerly for the definition of the Ultimate aim. One of the delegates put it very well when he said: "Whoever demands a definition of Zionism at this juncture, wants to mobilize all our enemies against us; like

the man who, passing through a dense forest, screamed with fear, and rallied all the bears in the forest about him."

The instinct of self-preservation saved the Congress from this fatal error, and it dropped the fire with which it had been playing, in time.

Another momentous question which the Congress had to decide was its attitude towards the Labour Government of Great Britain. Even Dr. Weizmann, the man who was most loyal to the Mandatory Government, who had never faltered in ten years in his policy of implicit cooperation with the British Government, had been too overcome with indignation by the White Paper. He announced his resignation from the Presidency of the Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency, amid a dignified protest against the "betrayal" of the Mandate. However, the executive of the Jewish Agency was invited to negotiate with a Cabinet Committee, and the upshot was a sop to the Jewish Agency. In May, 1941, the letter of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald to Dr. Weizmann, interpreting the implications of a number of clauses in the White Paper and designed to rectify alleged misconstructions, was published. This letter figured prominently in the Congress debates. Again Jabotinsky endeavored, by means of a fine analysis, to prove that it was an exceedingly ambiguous document and really left the White Paper unaltered. It, therefore, did not warrant a renewal of confidence and loyalty. The Congress, however, did not take the dangerous step of rejecting the Letter. There can hardly be any doubt but that it would have spelled disaster for Zionism.

Another event at the Zionist Congress, which was calculated to attract the attention of the Government, was a speech by Rabbi Dr. Stephen Wise, a member of the American Congress, against the British labour Government. When the temperature of the speech rose to a certain point, Dr. Weizmann demonstratively left the Hall. Dr. Lider, President of the Federation of English Zionists, protested on behalf of the English Zionists, declared Rabbi Wise's speech to be irresponsible and stressed the danger to Zionism of trying to interfere in British party politics. Mr. Emanuel Neuman, now a member of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, also declared that the former did not express the views of the American block as a whole. Nevertheless, the impression prevailed that even Rabbi Wise's oration did not disapprove of the contents of his oration, and that the latter merely gave unequivocal expression to the outraged feelings of an injured and deceived people. Many a Zionist nodded his head in approbation and relief: "At last somebody has said it!" Even Dr. Weizmann in his summing-up shunted when he came to Wise's speech from Wise to the Government. The speech of Stephen Wise, the pro-British American Congressman of the days before the entry of the United States into the War, indicated, said Dr. Weizmann, how deeply the Jewish people had been disappointed by the Mandatory Government. And further on he declared:

"No Government, no matter how great, can afford to trifle with solemn pledges, and the greater a Power is the less it can afford it. I fear that the Government, by undermining the moral forces latent in the Zionist Movement, by forgetting that at a very difficult hour for her the feel-

ings of a suffering people were turned to Britain, by qualifying its pledge and minimizing the great political understanding, is trifling with the sentiments of an ancient people, sentiments which even a Government like the British Government cannot treat as a negligible quantity."

Significant of the new departure in Zionist policy was the non-reelection of Weizmann, the man whom the British Government desired to see reinstated, the loyal Zionist, who appreciated the Government point of view and was moderate in his demands. True, the extremists, the Revisionists, were routed; their motion for defining the ultimate aim was defeated; on the new Executive, disciples of Weizmann preponderate; the main lines of the Executive's programme are merely a continuation of Weizmann's policy. Yet there has been a departure. The Austrian delegate Stricker expresses well the viewpoint of the essentially Oppositionist Congress that elected no essentially Weizmannist an Executive: "We voted for Sokolow as President because we think that the change of policy which we desire requires a change of personality. We believe that a certain tendency has thereby been checked."

Zionism therefore safely crossed the rubicon. It marked back as it had gone, but it had smelt the odour of gunpowder in the meantime. It marched back with reservations, and with constant looking backward.

The new Coalition Zionist Executive which was elected after a hard struggle could not help realizing the extraordinarily difficult position of the Zionist cause. The aftermath of the political upheavals still pervades the

atmosphere of Palestine; its gates are closed to new immigration, and economic development is at a standstill. Recent legislation also bodes the Jewish endeavour no good. First in chronological order came

The Ordinance of 1926, which the new Ordinance is designed to amend, obliges the owner of land in the event of its sale to pay the tenant compensation for his eviction and for any improvements made by him on the land in question. Under the new Ordinance, however, no court may issue an order of eviction unless and until the High Commissioner is "satisfied" that the tenant is assured of a livelihood equal to that which he derived from the land. But that is not all. Not only must the tenant be assured of benefits equivalent to those which he derived from the land, but so must anyone who has, no matter under what legal status, been grazing or watering cattle thereon.

The Administration has therefore in every case absolute discretion, that is to say, it is at liberty from purely political or other motives - to declare that it is "not satisfied" that the Bedouin shepherd, who cannot readily adapt himself to another occupation, is assured of a livelihood equal to that which he derived from the land in question. The Jews are under the impression that this Ordinance is designed or at least bound, to arrest not only the progress of their agricultural settlement but the development of the country generally.

No less disquieting to Zionists is the Development Scheme which is now the topic of Palestine. The Scheme was recommended by Simpson to meet the allegedly self-contradictory obligation of Article 6 of the Mandate, that of facilitating Jewish immigration to Palestine and promoting intensive Jewish settlement on the land whilst safeguarding the rights and position of the other sections of the population; as also for the purpose of giving effect to Article 2, which requires the Mandatory to introduce land reforms appropriate to the local conditions and having regard, inter alia, to the furtherance of close Jewish settlement on the land. For the purpose of carrying out the Development Scheme, Simpson recommended a loan of £. 2,000,000 from the British Treasury. The Development Commission will have very wide powers of control over changes of ownership of land, and even the power of expropriation in the interests of the Scheme. They will endeavor to improve the farming methods of the Arab peasant and install irrigation for him wherever practicable, so as to enable him to gain a decent livelihood from a smaller area than he hitherto required; in this way new areas will be released for settlement. The Commission will also be charged with the reclamation of large areas by means of irrigation, swamp drainage, sanitation and agricultural research. The Scheme will therefore interfere actively in the economic and social life of the country.

Zionism, whose main object is to bring a maximum number of Jews into the country and establish them on the land without harm to the present inhabitants, has

always favored the replacement of the system of extensive cultivation by intensive cultivation; and nothing could be more welcome to it than the improvement of the soil, the development of agriculture, and the creation of a land reserve for new settlement. Responsible Zionists have always realised that a harmonious development of Jewish settlement was impossible without the raising of the efficiency and economic standard of the Arab peasant's (fellah's) economy. After the experience of the last two years, however, during which Zionist ideals were used as weapons against the Jewish cause, the Zionist ideal of the return of economically uprooted Jewish masses to productive work on their ancestral soil was defined by the Arabs as the predatory dispossession of others, and the underpopulated land was presented as economically saturated in order to justify the stoppage of Jewish development, - it would be strange if the Jews did not receive at least with reservations even such projects of the Mandatory as are laudable in principle.

Unfortunately, it is claimed by the Jews, signs that the Development Scheme is not to be purely a progressive and impartial measure, are already not wanting. The Macdonald Letter already referred to, as well as the letter of Lord Passfield to the High Commissioner on the Development Scheme, state, in so many words, that the Scheme will concern itself primarily with the colonization of Arabs rendered landless through the land purchases of the Jews. At first sight, one would suppose that the

reference is solely to Arab cultivators (tenants) who were evicted upon the acquisition of the land by Jewish owners. Dr. Shiels, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, however, replying to a question of Major Kenworthy in the House of Commons, stated that preference for colonization under the Development Scheme as Arabs rend red landless by Jewish purchases would be given not only to tenants but to owners - fellahin who had voluntarily sold their land to Jews. This strained interpretation has certainly no justification in logic. In the majority of cases where Jewish Societies bought land from a fellah, the latter lacked the capital for exploiting his surplus land. The price he received for the surplus land which he sold to Jewish buyers enabled him to develop and improve his farm. The Administration realized this so well, that in 1939 they annulled, as a no-longer necessary safeguard, the provision of the Land Transfer Ordinance of 1920 which obliged the fellah to retain a sufficient area of land for himself. The Jews feel that even if a fellah found it expedient to sell all of his land to Jews, surely that is his private concern, and it is hard to see why he should be given preference under the Land Development Scheme.

Mr. M. Smilansky, one of the oldest Jewish Agricultural settlers in Palestine, who has the most intimate knowledge of the life and condition of the fellaheen, cites in a study on "The Jewish Settlement and the Fellah" which he published in 1930, dozens of examples of Arab villages which were saved from ruin and habilitated themselves very satisfactorily by selling part of their land to their Jewish neighbors, acquiring appliances, and adopting

new methods.

Mr. Smolansky's case receives confirmation from a British source which the prevailing British policy finds few occasions for invoking. Mr. Strickland, an expert sent out to Palestine by the British Government in 1930 immediately after Simpson to investigate the state of the fellaheen and the possibilities of developing cooperatives among them, emphasizes in his Report that the cause of the fellah's poverty is not shortage of land but his indebtedness to the effendi (the rich landlord), who extracts a heir-raising usury from him. He declares that the only way in which the fellah's lot can be improved is by supplying him the means with which to rid himself of the burden of debts and interest under which he is staggering. Strickland's exact words are:

> "....His trouble however is his debt. As long as a small cultivator sees the burden of his debt to be great and the rate of accruing interest so high that not only the present produce of his fields, but even the increased amount of produce which he may hope to secure by minor agricultural improvement are insufficient to pay off his creditors, he will make no sincere attempt to alter his plan of cultivation. If his present crops allow him to pay one-half of the interest upon his debt, there is little inducement to make such improvements as will enable him to pay three-quarters of the amount. The benefit will fall entirely into the hands of his creditors, while he will only labor the harder without hope of reaching freedom." (The Strickland Report, 1930, p.p. 1-4).

Mr. Strickland holds that the way to relieve the fellah from his evil plight is not to prevent him from selling his surplus, but to grant him the means which will release him from his bondage to the usurer. These means cannot be supplied in the form of short term loans, while

the grant of long term credits by Government or by an agricultural bank is regarded by Mr. Strickland as a real danger which would have the ultimate effect of dispossessing him from his land. In support of this view Mr. Strickland refers to the small agricultural bank in Transjordan which is "compelled to foreclose and sell the property of about 4 per cent of its creditors each year" (Strickland Report p. 33). Elsewhere in his report, Mr. Strickland elaborates his argument that in order to relieve himself from his burden of debt the fellah must sell his land or lease it in its entirety for a number of years, and on page 36, he is quite definite in his statement that "there is in general much to be said for the encouraging of the fellah to sell a part of his irrigable land through the agency of the "Land Fund Committee" and to repay the reasonable claims of his creditors from the sale proceeds and develop the remainder of his irrigable land with any surplus remaining and with such additional money as the Fund will advance."

Under the circumstances, the Jews maintain that if some Arabs have chosen to sell their farms and start afresh in the town or elsewhere, there does not seem to be much justification for according him preference for colonisation under the Development Scheme as a person "rendered landless by the Jews."

Thus far, the Arab leaders have also been opposing the Scheme, whilst their avowed reasons exclusively political, their motives can hardly be so. They are for the most part big landowners and are afraid lest the Scheme

may place them in an awkward position. For those small Arab farmers who have through indebtedness lost their land to their rich money lenders will hardly be pleased when the Scheme gets started and they see tenants who were evicted as a result of Jewish purchases and generously compensated, on the one hand, and small owners like themselves who voluntarily sold their land to Jews, on the other, being settled at the State's expense; whilst they, (the small Arab farmers) who lost their land to other Arabs derive no immediate benefit from the Scheme.

In general the Arab leaders fear and distrust novelty and progress of any sort. After his visit to Palestine in 1922, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald published the following statement:

> "The land of Palestine is held by large owners, and the same class has concentrated in its hand the ownership of towns, the employment of labor and trade. More than that, it has ruled, collected taxes, and led an obedient people. All this is threatened. Palestinian social economics had its foundation removed by the ending of the Turkish occupation. The winds of Europe are blowing in upon them, and they cannot stand the cutting blast. They see the coming shadow of a cultivator protected in his labour and property, they see the end of unjust exactions, they see their power vanishing and they are fighting for their lives."....."The Arab leaders are in possession. They are conservative and their interests are wrapped up in their conservations. They have power over their people, they are still leaders. They can influence their people to believe foolish things and to act against common interests."

However, it should be added that although the Director of Development has already arrived in Palestine, it is doubtful whether the British Parliament will ratify such a large loan at a time when the British farmer is struggling

hard to keep above water, and when the state of British budget has just compelled Macdonald to dissolve the Labour Cabinet and form a National Coalition Cabinet with a rigid programme of economy.

In addition to all the external factors, the new Zionist Executive will find a number of internal difficulties which will render its task difficult in the extreme. An empty exchequer, a burden of debt, a truncated budget not sufficient even for barely tiding over, let alone executing the constructive work. The budget adopted this year at the session of the Administrative Council of the Jewish Agency at Basle is only L.P. 300,000, less than half that which was ratified at the First Session in 1929 at Zurich. The non-Zionist partners in the Jewish Agency who joined in the Palestine endeavor at a time when the colossal crisis in America and the rest of the world was already setting in, have not as yet displayed any great efforts to harness themselves to the wagon of responsibility. The prolonged tension and the concentration of all the energies of the Jewish Agency on political problems, combined with the economic crisis to reduce the collections of Keren Hayesod (Jewish Foundation Fund) the financial instrument of the Jewish Agency. Zionist leaders in every country, who have for two years anxiously followed the actions of the various Commissions, the negotiations between the Government and the Jewish Agency, and political developments, which had acquired particular importance in Zionism, lost sight of the practical side of the undertaking. Collections also suffered much as a result of the internal strife within the Zionist Organization. Naturally, the

economic crisis, which began in the United States in the second half of 1929 was the main cause. The Jewish middle classes, who in America as everywhere else are the main contributors to Zionist funds, were particularly affected. When powerful states and especially financial institutions are feeling the pinch, it is not surprising that Keren Hayesod should have been so hard hit.

According to the report presented to the Second Session of the Administrative Council of the Jewish Agency, the income of Keren Hayesod was -

From April 1929 to Mar. 1930	From Apr. 1930 to Mar. 1931
L. 320,140	L. 256,080.

or a decrease of approximately 33%.

And if even the funds available for national settlement in preceding years barely sufficed for the quota of labour immigration of those days, but were incapable of accelerating the progress of the undertaking to the pace which the situation called for, the grave import of the above figures will be appreciated. According to Government figures the natural increase of population in Palestine in 1930 was as follows:

Jews - 3,872

Non-Jews -21,202

The rate of increase of the population of Palestine in 1929 was 24.6 per thousand!

Obviously, at the present rate of immigration Zionism cannot possibly catch up the disadvantage of last year (17,330 inhabitants).

Mr. Eric Mills, Senior Assistant Chief Secretary of the Palestine Government, at the time of the Shaw Inquiry, prepared for the Commission of Inquiry some diagrams to indicate the probable ultimate state of population on various assumptions of Jewish immigration. According to Diagram IV, assuming that the annual surplus of Jewish immigration over emigration will be 10,000 and the natural increase of the population in Palestine of 19°/o per 1,000, the Jewish population will number only 2.5 millions by the time the non-Jewish population attains the figure of 5 millions. Now, the average annual excess of Jewish immigration over emigration in the past decade has in fact been only 9,000. If Jewish immigration is to proceed still more slowly in future, (which it is bound to do by far) the prospects would, of necessity appear to be considerably restricted.

Economically, the country is rapidly emerging from the primitive stage. The enterprises which are now being developed are completely changing its aspect and converting it into a progressive country that attracts foreign capital and immigrants. The expansion of Palestine's capacity for absorption, upon which Zionism pins all its hopes and bases its claims, may turn out disastrous if it is not in a position simultaneously to increase its investments of men and money. For in that case others will reap the field which it has ploughed and sown.

Zionists therefore claim that mass immigration of Jews and speedy economic realisation are the only ways by which Zionism can achieve its goal.

Zionism has reached a turning point in its history. From various causes, both temporary and permanent, the income of its funds keeps falling off. There is reason to believe that the permanent causes have been underrated, and that the worsening of the economic condition of World Jewry and the political situation are less to blame than was supposed. In times of crisis, even rich States, which derive their budgets from taxation, find it difficult enough, to make both ends meet. How, during those very same 12 post-war years which Governments with civil and military authorities found so distressing financially, the Palestine endeavor has been sustained solely by voluntary contributions. Year after year the Jew in the Diaspora in general and in the United States in particular, has been giving his contribution to Zionist funds as well as to local charities, cultural institutions and relief for East European Jewry and Jewish Colonization in Crimea and Siberia. He is tired of giving, even apart from economic crisis. Party differences, criticism of methods and distrust of the persons in charge helped further to weaken the desire to give, and where there is no means of strong appeal to his sentiments, all depends on the donor's frame of mind. Obviously, a national movement cannot be built on such unsound foundations.

Zionist leaders are already beginning to realize the situation, and their thoughts are turning to other methods. They seem to have just realized that only when active and indispensible economic factors are created to take the place of the precarious sentiment of donors,

will Zionism be filled with new life and vigour. Only when the upbuilding of the land has become the personal concern of every Zionist, when the individual sees in Zionism the solution of his own personal problem and seeks in it a roof over his own head and bread for his own mouth, and the Movement grows of itself without outside stimuli and sentimental flavoring.

Do the objective conditions for such a development exist?

At first sight it would seem paradoxical to look for big prospects for Zionism and the upbuilding of Palestine just at a time of economic ebb and ruin in Jewry the world over and especially in America. The Jews, essentially a race of small entrepreneurs, are but superficially rooted in the economic life of the countries they live in, and consequently, as is well known, they bear the brunt of every crisis and every tremor on the stock exchange is liable to impoverish them overnight. Dr. Arlazarov, succeeded to Colonel Kish in the Zionist Executive believes that just these ruined Jews in Diaspora will seize the first opportunity that offers itself of saving their remaining worldly goods and investing them in safe enterprises. "Everybody knows the important part that was played by the Jews in the development of industry and commerce in various European countries and in America, and the extensive prospective opportunities in Palestine of which I have just spoken will offer a wide field for the energy, talents and capital of the Jews of the Diaspora in com-

eral and the Jews of the United States in particular.'
(From Dr. Arlazarov's speech given in Chambers to Jewish newspaper correspondents).

In the political tension the fact has gone unnoticed that just in the last two years the foundations have been laid for numerous large new undertakings and many enterprises already in existence have made great progress.

In virtue of the Palestine and East Africa Loan Act, 1926, one million pounds out of the L. 3,000,000 loan which was advanced to Palestine were allotted to the construction of the Haifa Harbour, and in February 1929, work on the Harbour was begun with vigour. In January, 1930, the contract between the Palestine Potash Co. Ltd., and the Crown Agents for the Colonies on behalf of the Palestine Government for the exploitation of the minerals of the Dead Sea, was signed. The Ruttenberg hydro-electric plant on the Jordan River, and the electrification of the country are already being realised on a large scale. In the Maritime Plain, electrical power is already being used for the lifting of water from underground currents. The Central Power Station by the Jordan and the Yarmuk, will soon begin to supply electrical power at moderate prices to farmers and citrus-growers, and electricity is beginning to play an important part in the undertakings.

According to the Report of the Experts submitted to Joint Palestine Surveys Commission, Boston, 1928, there are 1K0,000 acres of vacant land suitable for citrus and particularly orange plantation in the Maritime Plain. Simpson on p. 93 of his Report states

that the development of this branch justified the belief that this country can at no distant date support a much larger population than at present.

Thanks to the special qualities of the Jaffa orange, which has a world wide reputation, the Government inspection of exported fruit, the modern packing methods introduced by the Jewish cooperative societies and the "Pardess" Company, this culture has a great future, and the Maritime Plain is destined to absorb tens of thousands of families of orange-growers and others. Already this area is being covered with new patches of orchard every year, and electricity will hasten the process. The experience of recent years shows that there is no safer investment for small capital than this.

The prime beneficiary of the Dead Sea Concession, of the biggest source of the fertilising element of potash in the world, will be Palestine. The growth of the Company it is said will bring with it various industrial changes, and will stimulate the building of roads and a railroad, which will traverse the Jordan Valley and revive the entire district. This area, which combines a tropical climate with a comparative abundance of water, bids fair to be converted into a winter vegetable garden.

As for the Haifa Harbour, its geographical and strategical advantages as to the vertex of so many concurrent lines of communication - the Hedjaz Railway and through it all the highways of Arabia, the road to Damascus, and in the near future the Bagdad Railway - are bound to make Haifa one of the leading ports of

the Mediterranean, the main outlet not only of Palestine, but of the great hinterland of Iraq, part of Persia and North Arabia, and Palestine a bridge of the first importance between the Orient and the Occident.

The Oil of Mosul is also destined to play an important part in this development. Petroleum and electricity together will solve the problem of fuel, which is of the highest importance for the development of all industry and agriculture.

With the development of all these potentialities the capacity of absorption of the country will expand and will attract in particular the middle classes of Jewry, whose existence is being threatened. The question of middle class settlement figured prominently at the last Congress in the economic plan of the American Zionists. An Industrial and Commercial Council of Experts will be established in Palestine for the purpose of advising and supplying information. This Council will have branches in all the countries which supply immigrants to Palestine, and there can be no doubt but all those elements who have lost most of their fortunes in various kinds of investments in capitalistic countries will take advantage of the opportunity to save what can be saved. Already there are people from America and Europe in Palestine who have lost all of their money on the stock exchange, except for the part which they once invested in land or other real property in Palestine.

The encouragement of private initiative is the topic of the hour in Zionism. Many detailed proposals for investment enterprise on a "commercial basis" were submitted to the last Congress, and the new Executive of

the Jewish Agency in particular are engaged upon the elaboration of a scheme for an internal loan and for an international loan guaranteed by the Government for purposes of constructive development.

New possibilities are also opened up by the extension of the Colonial Development Fund of the British Colonial office. As a result of Sir Herbert Samuel's interpellation in the House of Commons, Palestine has been included in its sphere of activity. A sum of L. 100,000 is allotted to this Fund annually, and its range of activities comprises industry, communications, land improvement, etc. Loans and subventions from the Fund are obtainable only through Government channels, but individuals or societies may apply for them. Accordingly, the Jewish Agency, the Keren Kayemeth Leisrael (The Jewish National Fund) or any company that undertakes to carry out any plan of development which is calculated to benefit the country and therefore the Government exchequer, can apply to this source for a loan. For example, the Huleh District in Upper Galilee, comprises an area of about 15,000 acres of swamp-land. It belongs to the Government and for part of it a certain Syrian holds a concession from the Turkish Government granted to him before the war. The concession lapsed, but the British Administration renewed it. The concessionnaire has been occasionally negotiating with persons who have or can interest capital. It is probable that he will soon sell the concession. The area in question is rich in water, is eminently suitable for intensive settlement, and was recommended by Simpson for

the Land Development Scheme. Once the enormous swamps are drained, the value of the adjacent land will rise and opportunities for colonization in the North of Palestine will be created.

A feature of the Jewish Agency's quest of means for widening the scope of its activities is the proposal to render its budget productive. It is proposed to derive the maximum utility from the Funds of the Agency: Keren Hayesod is to become the actual Colonizing Fund. Of the L.P. 4,400,000 collected by Keren Hayesod to date, only 27% were expended on agriculture, 1.8% on industry and 41% on immigration and labor. The rest was spent on administration, social services and education. This is going to be changed radically. A beginning has already been made in this direction. Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, has already consummated the transfer of the Hadassah Hospital in Tel-Aviv to the Township, and Hadassah's contribution to its upkeep is to be progressively reduced. Negotiations for a similar arrangement with the Jewish Community of Haifa are under way. Negotiations are also in progress for the municipalization of the Peter Bohweimer Hospital in Tiberias, which has thus far been maintained by Hadassah. For some years the transfer of education to the Jewish Community of Palestine and the augmentation of the Government's participation in its upkeep, has been a constant topic of discussion. The last Congress postponed consideration of the proposal to the next Congress. (See report from this office entitled

Education in Palestine).

Another of the few factors favorable to the Jewish endeavor is the cheapening of settlement thanks to the experience accumulated...

After a long period of standstill there are obvious signs of renewed activity and better prosperity for the Zionist Funds. The new Executive at the first meeting held in Zurich decided to send an emergency delegation to the United States. Mr. Sokolow is to be at the head. All the Zionist parties in America are reported to have united to work for the success of the drive. The effective method, long in disuse, of canvassing from house to house is to be revived. Dr. Weizmann, on his part has agreed to lead the campaign in South Africa. The Zionist leaders hope that they will be able to procure the indispensable means for the maintenance of existing undertakings. In the meantime all preparations are being made to reorganize the Zionist apparatus, to direct the work into new channels and to create the requisite conditions for undertaking the constructive plans which are the order of the day.

There are also signs of improvement in the political situation and security in Palestine. Although last August was characterized by a strained political atmosphere, and an agitation was carried on against the Jews by the Arab extreme leaders under various pretexts, one can say almost with certainty that the decisive external cause of the attack against the Jews has been considerably eliminated. With the publication of the Report of the

Wailing Wall Commission and the acceptance of a clearly and a definitely stated interpretation of the "status quo", which has assumed the form of strictly defined regulations - the fatal trap which was to ensnare the Zionist movement has been removed for the moment but will probably be revived at the approaching Moslem Conference in December. Thus, the situation that brought about the political complications and transformed the Holy Land into a volcano of racial hatred during the last two years has been considerably eased.

It is noteworthy that it was the economic interest that in many cases contributed to contact and cooperation between various Arabic and Jewish groups. For instance, the combined efforts and plans of the Jewish and Arabic agriculturists in their hard struggle against the locust all over the land last spring and the mice-plague in the Valley of Esdraelon, the joint petitions to the district Commissioner of Jaffa, Mr. Campbell, to impose an additional tax for the purpose of finding new markets and gaining a good reputation for the Palestinian oranges; the common action of Arab and Jewish experts in the Economic Advisory, as well as in the Agricultural Advisory Board; the agreement signed in July 1931 by two groups of Arabs and Jews to found a shipping company; the common delegation of Jewish and Arabic shoemakers to impose a protective tariff on leather products, and the appeal of a few Arab villages in the Upper Galilee to Dr. Hausner, the Commercial Advisor of the Polish Consulate in Palestine interceding on behalf of their admission as members of the "Syndicate of the Tobacco Growers in the Upper Galilee." All these

facts Mr. Arlosorov claims, promise a gradual and natural solution of the painful problem of restoring peace in the land.

A turning point in the present state of affairs is the recent appointment of Sir Arthur Granville Wauchope to the office of the High Commissioner of Palestine. It may be assumed that a man of military training and discipline will not endure disturbances of any kind and under any circumstances. The reorganization of the Police Forces according to the recommendations of the British Expert, Mr. Lowbiggin, and the appointment of a new Head of Police, is another important factor in the tendency shown by the Government, although somewhat late, to establish peace in the land.

The continuation of the above external and internal factors no doubt will bring about a cardinal change, there are prospects of the Land passing from a phase of transition and crisis to a phase of greater prosperity. Then there will be found a Modus Vivendi for the relations of the two neighboring peoples.

As to the prospects of Zionism, one can already at this date give quite an affirmative answer.

After the process of transition has been completed, if ever, and after Zionism has assumed a new form, the hour of its recovery will dawn and the realization of Zionist ambitions will draw nearer though at a far slower pace.

File No. 800
jbs-eo

[redacted]

Interview with L.I. Alamirov, Mr. Berlson,
(members of the new Executive) and other officials
of the Jewish Agency.

DISTRIBUTION.

Original and four copies to the Department
Copy to A.I.C. American Embassy, Paris.
Copy to American Embassy, London.
Copy to American Consulate General, Beirut, Syria.
Copy for files of the Consulate General, Jerusalem.

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, Nov. 17, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
NOV 19 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

800

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consulate General, Beirut, Syria.

Dear Sir;

I have the honor to attach herewith a short political report as to cover the fortnight ending Nov. 15, 1931.

I have the honor to be Sir;

always at your service,

very respectfully yours.

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

800.

POLITICAL REPORT.
Fortnight Ending Nov. 15, 1931.

****

Al-Kitleh's Conference.

The members of Al-Kitleh Watanieh, the extremist nationalists, made in Damascus in the first part of this month a conference in which they discussed the situation, members attanded this conference from Allepo and Homs. It said that the assembly dicided to return back to their negative situation if the French do not help them to rule in the country, and actuall y wrote in their paper Al-Youm some artivles in this respect. However thier conference was confidential and is translated by their political adversers by a gest to show the French that they still exist.

Other Parties.

The other parties did not show any gest during this fortnight as if they are absent.

Electric Boycottage.

The Electric lights boycottage that remained for 7 months came to an end in the first part of this month following a piaster decrease in the price of electric lights and acceptance of some demands by the Electric Lights Company.

Treaty.

The Consulate of Nejd at Damascus published that a Treaty of "Bon Voisinage" has been signed recently between France and Nejd, the text of Which will be published later.

Rumors.

It is rumored in Damascus that a certain disgrement exist between King Feisal and his brother king Ali andthat Ali left Bagdad and is now in Ammam, Transjordania.

Ponsot.

From the run of things here it seems that the political circles wait the arrival of M. Ponsot with great patience.

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

AMERICAN CONSULATE - GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

Telegram Sent

Confirmation - File - Voucher Copy - True Text

DABBOUS

BAB TOUMA

DAMASCUS

PLEASE TELEPHONE ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TODAY

GOOLD

November 21, 1931

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

Destination of telegram:

Bab Touma, Damascus, Syria

AMERICAN CONSULATE - GENERAL
BEIRUT, SYRIA

Telegram Sent

Confirmation - File - Voucher Copy - True Text

800

Secstate

Washington

November 21 - 3:00 p.m. My despatch No. 87 of October 3rd period Monsieur Ponsot returned on Tuesday semi-colon On Thursday he proceeded to Damascus comma and yesterday personally took over the Government of Syria with a view to the conduct of elections to the Chamber of Deputies in January period

Goold

November 21, 1931.

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

DESTINATION OF TELEGRAM: Washington, D. C.,
United States of America.

In reply refer to
File No. 800
HSG:ET

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA November 21, 1931.

Mr. Joseph Dabbouss,
Bab Touma,
Damascus,
Syria.

800

Dear Mr. Dabbouss:

I have a telephone call in for you. I suppose that when it is finally put through, we shall shout at each other for a few minutes, and then conclude that there is no use continuing.

What I want is for you to seek an interview with Fares Bey Khouri as soon as you conveniently can, and hear what he has to say concerning the latest developments. And I should like very much to have your own appreciation of the position as soon as possible.

Secondly, I meant to ask you to meet Mr. W. Harold Pirrie, an Englishman representing American companies, who is seeking agents in this country. Mr. Pirrie will be at the Omayad on Monday morning.

Very respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD
H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

A true copy of the signed original

NO. 130

Copy for Mr. Gould

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

NOV 3 1931

SUBJECT: Elections in January.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

Last Tuesday, the 17th, the High Commissioner, M. Henri Ponsot, returned to Beirut after an absence of more than five months in France; he was received in the manner befitting such an occasion; that afternoon at 5:00 he met practically the whole of political, ecclesiastical, financial and commercial Syria at the Serrail (Government House), for delegations had come from Aleppo, Latakia and Damascus to greet him, and among the Damascenes were notably all the Nationalist leaders with the exception of Fares Bey Khoury who was ill; on Thursday at 2:00 o'clock, he left for Damascus where he established his residence, and Friday at noon, he personally took over the Government of the State of Syria with a view to conducting the elections of deputies to the Syrian chamber during the month of January. The speed with which M. Ponsot acted, for the moment, took away the breath of the politicians; they were dazed, and several days elapsed before any reaction whatever was discernible. Then, it gradually became apparent that a great change had been

wrought

wrought in the political situation here. Ponsot had acquired the confidence of the Nationalists.

The High Commissioner and his immediate entourage guarded the secret of their intentions very well, so well in fact, that Sheik Taggeddine, the dispossessed head of the Government of Syria, is said to have been ignorant of what lay in store for him. M. Ponsot had already reached Damascus while the Sheik was enjoying the gayeties of Beirut. He was summoned to Damascus early Friday morning, and was apprised of the Commissioner's decision only a few hours before the public announcement was made.

The letter which M. Ponsot handed to Sheik Taggeddine informing him of the end of his provisional government and the assumption of power and responsibility by the Commissioner himself was drawn in the following language:

"Mr. President,

"At the hour when there opens for Syria the period of putting into effect the organic Statute promulgated on the 14th of May 1930, it has appeared necessary that the Representative of the Mandatory Power should more directly assume the responsibility which belongs to him in view of the application of the Mandate.

"Thus there comes to an end the provisional régime which should precede the putting into effect of the Statute, all in accordance with the recommendations made by the qualified representatives of the French Government to the League of Nations, and approved by the latter.

"For four years, Your Excellency has been good enough to give me his assistance at the head of the provisional government and you have discharged your responsibilities in the spirit defined by the official declaration which fixed, in advance, the course and the duration of that government.

"Today, we reach the end of this stage, and Your Excellency is called upon to take his place, with the eminent personalities who had previously

assumed

assumed the responsibility of power under the Mandate, as a member of the Council called upon to assist me with its advice during the course of the period which we now enter, up to the establishment of a regularly constituted government.

"On this occasion it is particularly agreeable to me to express to you all my appreciation for the aid which you have given me in the accomplishment of an ever delicate task.

"Free election for the nomination of members of the Chamber of Deputies in Syria will normally take place during the month of January.

"It is my intention that they shall take place in the most favorable atmosphere for the confident collaboration which will be necessary tomorrow, as well as today, to assure, with the help of all men of good will, the success of the progressive evolution of the Mandate in accordance with the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

"Your Excellency will find attached the three decrees of even date which fix, for this preliminary period, the distribution of powers and the manner of their exercise.

"Please accept, Mr. President, the assurance of my highest consideration."

The first of the decrees mentioned creates a Council to assist the High Commissioner with a view to putting into effect the Syrian Constitution. It is composed of three classes of members: First, persons who have discharged important State functions, largely former heads of the Mandated States; second, the President of the Council, the President of the Court of Cassation, the Rector of the University of Damascus, the President of the Administrative Council of the Sandjak of Alexandretta and the Presidents of the Chambers of Commerce of Aleppo and Damascus; third, other persons whom the High Commissioner may wish to consult or to be heard by the Council.

The

The annex of the foregoing decree makes the actual nominations, and I hardly believe that it is necessary to mention the names of the members here. Suffice it to say that there is just one strong Nationalist on the list, Hachim Bey El-Atassi, President of the Constituent Assembly of 1928. The others, the former heads of Mandated States and high functionaries of the present régime, may be said to be friendly to the French, but they are men of different types, of different opinions, and in some cases have been very bitter political opponents. So, there will be debate in the Council, and no one group will have an ascendency.

The second decree provides for the conduct of the Government of Syria until the government regularly established under the Constitution shall take over. Until that time, the State services are to be assured by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Public Instruction, the Ministry of Public Works and Agriculture and by a General Secretariat which takes over the business of the Ministry of Interior and the President of the Council.

The third decree provides that the High Commissioner of the French Republic shall exercise the powers especially [granted] to the chief of the State by a decree of March 20, 1928, governing the conduct of elections.

There is no denying the fact that the démarche of M. Ponsot bewildered the Nationalists and they have hardly come to yet. At the very first, in this state of confusion, some of them observed that nothing had been said about the treaty or Syrian unity in the decrees; that it was all a "manoeuvre"; that the only thing that would make the French really reasonable was healthy British opposition, and that now that

Great

Great Britain was otherwise occupied, this opposition could not be supplied with the result that France would do just as she pleased. But this talk was only momentary, and was indulged in by persons actually dismayed by the fact that they approved of M. Ponsot's action, and did not like this entirely novel experience. However, that a considerable step forward had been taken was not to be denied and, in the face of this fact, the wild talk above outlined soon subsided. There was perfect silence for a few days in Damascus; and then the only comment on the situation was that things might go well, provided, that all the subordinate agents of the Mandatory conducted themselves in the spirit of M. Ponsot. The Nationalists are, for the moment, satisfied (although I am sure they regret to be), and they will undoubtedly take part in the elections. As between them and the French, trouble is put over until the negotiation of the treaty commences. Then there will be trouble enough, for the French will, I believe, be adamant on the subject of maintaining the present boundaries of the State which, of course, are anathemas to the Nationalists.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

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One copy to M.I.C., American Embassy, Paris.
One copy to American Embassy, Istanbul.

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H30:HT

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AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, Nov. 25, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
NOV 27 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

CONFIDENTIAL.

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

800

Dear Sir:

I have the honor to refer to your letter dated Nov. 21, 1931, File No. 800, relative to the latest French developments in Syria.

In reply thereto I beg to attach herewith a report
1/ as to cover the situation, a French copy of the official
2/ documents relating to the situation and a statement from
3/ Fares bey Khoury a member off Alkitleh Watanieh, Fares bey was ill and this caused some delay.

I have the honor to be Sir;

always at your service

very respectfully yours.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

800.
Enclosures;
1/ Report of the situation.
2/ Official documents.
3/ Statement of Fares bey Khoury.

New Political Regime
In Syria.

****

Quite Sudden

Without any previous indication, and quite sudden the French H. C. came to Damascus on evening of Nov. 19, 1931, and on the 20th morning, the journalists were invited to the press office in the French Delegation and offered each one copy of the new arrettes proclaming the change in the local government and the formation of the Council of Advice.

Official Documents.

Herewith I attach the copy of the letter of the F. H. C. to Cheik Tajeldin, Arrete No.1, Arrete No. 2, and Arrete No. 3, which are the regulation of the new regime now in forth.

H.C.'s Letter.

This document is rather i mpo rtant from a political point of view as being the article of dismiss of the prime minister of the Syrian State, th is being the first occasion since the French occupation to S yria have dismissed so openly a president of a Govern ment.

What is on the stage.

The French H. C. is now the head of the Syrian State and have directly all the administrative authority, he is assisted by this fonction by his Delegate in Damascus Mr. Solomiac, Cheik Tajeldin and Jamil bey Elshy the misnister of interior are now members of the Council of Advice, ministers of Justice, Public Instructions, Public Works, Agriculture and Commerce remain in their fonctions. There is appointed a Secretary General to take charge of the Minister of Interior, Mr. Solomiac office now is in the Building of Local Government.

Council of Advice.

By the new formation of temporary French Administration, the French H. C. is the president of State, he is helped by a Council of Advice composed of th e Previous Presidents of State; Jamil El-Shy, Haky Azem, Mostapha Burmuda, Sobhy bey Baraket, Damad Ahmed Namy bey, and Cheik Tajeldin, and the Presidents of Chanber of Commerce of Alepo and Damascus, The President of the Syrian Arabian College, Rida Said bey, the President od the Constitutional Assembly Hashem Attasy, and the Governor of the District of Alexandretta. Practically all of these persons have accpted to function in this council with the exception of Hashem Attassy who still swingling the acceptance pending a decision of his group AlKitleh Watanieh.

Great Secrecy.

From the date of the French occupation of this land to this date they did not show an action with good execution and great secrecy like what they did recently in the new formation. Cheik Tajeldin went to Beirut to welcome M. Ponsot on his arrival as well as Hashem bey Attassy and neither one knows anything of what is going to take place moreover even the French officials here do not know anything of what is happening.

Elections.

The aim of the actual formation is to carry out the elections for a parliment and the transfer of the temporary status in which we are into a constitutional one as per the Constitution declared by the Mandatory Government on May 14, 1930.

Echo of the City.

Generally speaking there is a tune of pleasure for the matter of dismiss of Cheik Tajeldin and his minister Jamil elshy, who remained in the government for about four years.

The groups who look for the posts do not favour the situation because they want the posts to themselves. Therefore the members of Alkitleh Watanieh do not favour much the situation but however all other groups look on the formation with acceptance because the members of Alkitleh did not became the masters of the situation.

Statement of Faris bey Khoury.

Herewith I attach the statement of Fares bey Khoury who is a member of AlKitleh Watanieh, this statement represent the opinion of Alkitleh.

The Secretary General.

Toufic bey Hayati, the Moutasaref of Hauran is appointed Secretary General of the State.

January 1932.

January 1932 is being t he month appointed for elections. There is at present preparations for the elections but no date is fixed .

My Opinion.

As an impartial watching the situation I would say that what the French did is the best that can be done; the Syrians at present are divided upon themselves into many groups and therefore it is very difficult to creat in fact a government that is impartial for everybody and that can be accept ed by everydoby there at the French will be the judge for all and in second place the French will watch the situation from a very near distance and control what should be controlled before it becomes chronic as happend in the elections of 1928 and in so doing the existance of the

French on the top of the local administration is a good trust for the minorities and foreigners.

Preperations.

There is at present a movement of preperations for the forth coming elections, and each political group is enlarging its saroundings and seeking new adherents.

Administration.

The local administration is passed to the French hands calmly and matters are running is their proper channels.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

STATEMENT OF FARES BEY KHOURY
about
The Regime of Transformation.

****

I interviewed Fares bey on the evening Nov. 24, 1931 and learned from him the following.

" The French action in the new regime is good for the matter of dismissing Cheik Tajeldin, this created a pleasure for the public.

The creation of the Council of Advice is a madness as this council means nothing, it is the H.C. who proposes, the H.C. decides and the H.C. executes, it is a curtain for hidding some actions.

The persons who form this council are ignorants, burned before the eyes of the public as having served the French, are not of sound capacity or opinion and are enemies to each other as each of them fought the other to the post of President.

People here lough on this new formation, it did not give any sign of French good fai th toward solving the many problems we have especially the matter of the termination of the mandate form and the creation of the treaty.

The Kitleh group will ma ke a conference and study the situation and decides what should be done.

Hashem bey Attassy did not yet decide whether or not he will participate in the Council of Advice or not but probably not.

The present situation is a situation of preparations for the elections and a period of transfer for the creation of a constitutional government.

Al Kitleh will participate in the elections and will have the majority of memebers in the parliment."

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

NO. 139

File Copy

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

NOV [illegible] 1931

SUBJECT: The Nationalists will Vote.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

As soon as I learned of the action of the High Commissioner in personally taking over the Government of the State of Syria for the purpose of conducting elections in January, I telephoned and wrote to our Druggoman in Damascus, Mr. Joseph Dabbouss, asking him to secure an interview with Fares Bey Khouri, the Nationalist leader, on the subject. Due to the illness of Fares Bey, Mr. Dabbouss was unable to see him until the evening of the 24th, and on this occasion Fares Bey stated as follows:

> "The action of M. Ponsot is to be approved of, and the dismissal of Sheik Taggedine has pleased the public. But the creation of the Advisory Council is madness. This Council means nothing. It is the High Commissioner who proposes and disposes. The Commission is a mere veil to hide something.
>
> "The persons named to form this Council are ignorant men, without public prestige, for they are known to be French servants; they are not men of capacity and are personal enemies, each of the other. People here laugh over the Council as it does not give any sign of French good faith in solving the problems before us, especially the termination of the Mandate and the celebration of a treaty.

"The

"The Nationalist group will have a conference, study the situation and decide on its action. Hachim Bey Atassi has not yet decided whether he will participate in the deliberations of the Advisory Council, but probably not.

"The Nationalist party will participate in the elections and will secure the majority of the members returned to the Chamber."

The Nationalist leader, in short, is thankful to M. Ponsot for having got rid of Sheik Taggedine; he considers the Advisory Council, composed of former leading politicians, a joke, but although he states that the Party will decide its action at a conference, he adds that it will participate in the elections.

In view of the remarks of Fares Bey concerning the personnel of the Advisory Council, perhaps it would be just as well for me to mention the members of it. They are the following former heads of Mandated States, and high officials:

Djemil Bey Ulmi, Head of the provisional Government, 1920.
Hakki Bey El Azem, Governor of the State of Damascus, 1920.
Mustapha Bey Barmada, Governor of the State of Aleppo, 1925.
Soubhy Bey Barakat, President of the Federation of the States of Syria, 1925; Head of the State of Syria, 1926.
Daoud Ahmed Hamy Bey, Head of the State of Syria, 1926.
Sheik Taggedine El Hassani, President of the Council, 1928.
Hachim Bey El Atassi, President of the Constituent Assembly, 1930.

Then, the President of the Council of State, Hakki Bey El Azem, already a member in his capacity of former Governor of Damascus; the President of the Court of Cassation,

tion, Mustapha Bey Barmada, already a member in his capacity of former Governor of the State of Aleppo; the Rector of the University of Damascus, Riza Bey Said; the President of the Administrative Council of the Sandjak of Alexandretta, Ibrahim Bey El Mounen; the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Aleppo, Selim Djamber; and the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Damascus, Aref Malbouni.

It is quite true that Sheik Taggedine was taken entirely by surprise in the matter of the change of government. He was summoned from Beirut to Damascus early on Friday morning, the 20th instant, and it was M. Helleu who engaged him in half an hour's nerve racking (for the Frenchman) conversation before M. Ponsot joined them and told the Sheik of his decision.

Mr. Dabbous reports from Damascus that the Nationalists are not very enthusiastic over the situation. They, along with nearly other groups, approve of the passing of Sheik Taggedine, and the other groups are at least temporarily contented in that with the passing of the Sheik, the Nationalists have not instantly become the masters.

It is obvious that the situation presents opportunities for the practice of the ancient art of divide et impere.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. Cobb,
American Consul General.

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ARTICLE 4

Le Conseil se réunira à Damas sur la convocation du Haut-Commissaire, soit pour être instruit de la situation, soit pour donner avis sur toute question qui lui serait soumise aux termes de l'Article premier./.

Damas, le 19 Novembre 1931.

Le Haut-Commissaire

Henri PONSOT.

Le Secrétaire Général

D. TETREAU.

ARRETE DU HAUT COMMISSAIRE

- 1931 - Syrie N° 1 -

du 19 Novembre 1931

Créant un Conseil Consultatif

en vue de la mise en vigueur du Statut Organique en Syrie.

Le Haut Commissaire de la République Française,

Vu les Décrets du Président de la République Française en date des 23 Novembre 1920 et 3 Septembre 1926,

Vu l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire n° 3111 du 14 Mai 1930 promulguant la Constitution Syrienne,

A R R Ê T E :

Article Premier

Un Conseil est créé pour assister le Haut Commissaire de ses avis en vue de la mise en vigueur du Statut Organique en Syrie.

.....

Article 2

Le Conseil est ainsi composé :

Sont membres de droit, à titre nominatif, les personnalités qui ont rempli les charges éminentes de l'Etat, suivant la liste chronologique donnée en Annexe.

Sont également désignés pour faire partie du Conseil les titulaires actuels des hautes fonctions suivantes :

Président du Conseil d'Etat,

Président de la Cour de Cassation,

Recteur de l'Université de Damas,

Président du Conseil Administratif du Sandjak d'Alexandrette,

Présidents des Chambres de Commerce d'Alep et de Damas.

Article 3

Pourront en outre prendre part aux réunions du Conseil toutes personnes que le Haut Commissaire estimerait opportun de consulter en Conseil ou de faire entendre par le Conseil.

ANNEXE A L'ARRETE DU HAUT COMMISSAIRE

- 1931 - Syrie n° 1 -

LISTE DES MEMBRES DU CONSEIL

A.- Membres de Droit

Leurs Excellences

1.- Djemil bey Ulchi, Chef du Gouvernement provisoire 1920

2.- Hakki bey el Azem, Gouverneur de l'Etat de Damas 1920

3.- Mustapha bey Barmada, Gouverneur de l'Etat d'Alep 1923

4.- Soubhy bey Barakat, Président de la Fédération des Etats de Syrie 1923

Chef de l'Etat de Syrie 1926

5.- S.A. le Damad Ahmed Namy Bey, Chef de l'Etat de Syrie 1926

6.- Le Cheik Tajeddine el Hassani, Président du Conseil 1928

7.- Hachem bey el Atassy, Président de l'Assemblée Constituante 1928

B.- Autres Membres

1.- le Président du Conseil d'Etat
(Hakki bey el Azem, déjà Membre de droit)

2.- le Président de la Cour de Cassation
(Mustapha bey Barmada, déjà Membre de droit)

3.- le Recteur de l'Université de Damas
Riza bey Said

4.- le Président du Conseil Administratif du Sandjak d'Alexandrette
Ibrahim bey el Moumen

.....

5.- le Président de la Chambre de Commerce d'Alep
Sélim Djambar

6.- le Président de la Chambre de Commerce de Damas
Aref Nalbouni.

ARRETE DU HAUT COMMISSAIRE

1931 - Syrie - N° 2

du 19 Novembre 1931

réorganisant les Services du Gouvernement Syrien
jusqu'à la mise en vigueur
de la Constitution de l'Etat de Syrie.

Le Haut Commissaire de la République Française,

Vu les Décrets du Président de la République Française en date des 23 Novembre 1920 et 3 Septtembre 1926,

Vu l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire n° 3111 du 14 Mai 1930 promulguant la Constitution Syrienne,

Arrête :

Article Premier.

Jusqu'à la mise en vigueur de la Constitution Syrienne et la formation d'un Gouvernement régulier reconnu, les services de l'Etat sont assurés par :

le Ministère de la Justice,

le Ministère des Finances,

le Ministère de l'Instruction Publique,

le Ministère des Travaux Publics et de l'Agriculture,

.....

et par un Secrétariat Général qui assurera, à titre provisoire, l'expédition des affaires courantes rattachées au Ministère de l'Intérieur et à la Présidence du Conseil dans les conditions définies ci-après.

Article 2.

Le Secrétariat Général du Gouvernement Syrien assure l'expédition des affaires courantes rattachées au Ministère de l'Intérieur, sous la signature d'un Ministre en exercice désigné à cet effet, et avec le concours du Délégué du Haut Commissaire siégeant en Conseil.

Tous documents officiels, Arrêtés et Décisions dont l'approbation est réservée au Chef de l'Etat par les textes en vigueur sont centralisés, avant signature, au Secrétariat Général.

La signature dans ce cas sera donnée conjointement par deux Ministres en exercice, a la diligence du Secrétariat Général et avec le concours du Délégué du Haut Commissaire siégeant en Conseil.

Le Secrétariat Général assure enfin la promulgation et la publication de tous Actes officiels au Journal Officiel.

Le Conseiller Délégué du Haut Commissaire auprès de l'Etat de Syrie exerce, en contact direct avec le Secrétariat Général, le contrôle qui lui appartient en vertu des textes en vigueur.

.....

Article 3

Restent en fonctions à la tête de leurs Départements respectifs les titulaires actuels des Ministères de la Justice, des Finances, de l'Instruction Publique, des Travaux Publics et de l'Agriculture.

La direction du Secrétariat Général est assurée par un haut fonctionnaire désigné à cet effet./.

Damas, le 19 Novembre 1931

Le Haut Commissaire

Henri PONSOT

Le Secrétaire Général

D. TETREAU.

ARRETE DU HAUT COMMISSAIRE

- 1931 - Syrie N° 3 -

du 19 Novembre 1931

portant modification, en vue de la mise en vigueur de la Constitution Syrienne, de l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire n° 1889 du 20 Mars 1928 relatif aux élections.

Le Haut Commissaire de la République Française,

Vu les Décrets du Président de la République Française en date des 23 Novembre 1920 et 3 Septembre 1926,

Vu l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire N° 3111 du 14 Mai 1930 promulguant la Constitution Syrienne,

Vu l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire créant un Conseil consultatif en vue de la mise en vigueur du Statut Organique en Syrie,

Vu l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire réorganisant les services du Gouvernement Syrien jusqu'à la formation d'un Gouvernement régulier reconnu,

Vu l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire n° 1889 du 20 Mars 1928 relatif aux élections en Syrie,

Arrête :

.....

Article premier.

En ce qui concerne la procédure des élections, le Haut Commissaire de la République Française exercera les attributions spéciales déléguées au Chef de l'Etat par l'Arrêté du Haut Commissaire n° 1889 du 20 Mars 1928, notamment celles prévues aux articles 3, 29, 31, 42, 51, 56 et 95, rappelées en annexe.

Article 2

Dans les cas prévus à l'article précédent, le Haut Commissaire est assisté, s'il y a lieu, par le Conseil Consultatif créé en vue de la mise en vigueur du Statut Organique./.

Damas, le 19 Novembre 1931

Le Haut Commissaire,

Henri PONSOT

Le Secrétaire Général,

D. TETREAU

ANNEXE A L'ARRETE DU HAUT COMMISSAIRE

1931 - Syrie N° 3

Dispositions de l'Arrêté N° 1889 du 20 Mars 1928 relatif à la procédure électorale visées par l'Arrêté n° 3 du 19 Novembre 1931.

Article 3.-

Un Arrêté du Chef de l'Etat fixe, avant chaque période électorale, le nombre des représentants pour chaque circonscription électorale et la communauté religieuse à laquelle ils doivent appartenir.

Article 29.-

.....

..... il n'y a pas vote au ler degré dans les cazas de Hassetché et Khérou : les électeurs au 2ème degré dans ces cazas sont désignés, au jour fixé par les élections, par le Conseil des Anciens de chaque tribu sédentaire ou semi-sédentaire : le nombre des électeurs du 2ème degré à désigner est fixé par un Arrêté du Chef de l'Etat.

.....

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Article 31.-

Les collèges électoraux sont convoqués par Arrêté du Chef de l'Etat. Cet Arrêté fixe le jour et les heures d'ouverture et de clôture du scrutin, il doit être publié 10 jours au moins avant la date fixée pour le scrutin du 1er degré.

Article 42.-

Dans les agglomérations urbaines, il est procédé au scrutin selon les formes prévues à l'article ci-dessus.

Un arrêté du Chef de l'Etat déterminera avant l'ouverture des opérations électorales, la liste de ces agglomérations.

Article 51.-

Vingt cinq jours au plus tard avant les élections du second degré, le Chef de l'Etat fixera le jour auquel il sera procédé au scrutin pour ces élections, ainsi que les heures d'ouverture et de clôture. Ces dispositions, et celles qui sont prévues par l'article 31 ci-dessus, peuvent faire l'objet d'un seul et même arrêté les deux délais impartis pouvant partir de la même date.

Les électeurs du second degré doivent recevoir officiellement notification de cet arrêté.

.....

Article 56.-

.....

Cinq jours au maximum après la réception au Ministère de l'Intérieur des procès-verbaux de vérification, la proclamation du résultat des élections au Conseil Représentatif est faite par le Chef de l'Etat, qui en prescrit et en fait assumer immédiatement l'affichage dans chaque circonscription électorale.

Article 95.-

Les Arrêtés du Chef de l'Etat ordonneront toutes mesures utiles pour l'application du présent Arrêté.

File Copy

NO. 140

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 1, 1931.

SUBJECT: French Policy.

800

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

On the theory that the Paris Embassy may have failed 1/ to send you the original clippings, I am sending clippings from today's "L'Orient" giving the text of a recent article which appeared in the "Journal des Débats" concerning M. Ponsot's action in taking over the Government of the State of Syria.

From conversations I have had with M. Chauvel on the subject, I agree with the editor of "L'Orient" that the article was plainly inspired by the Quai d'Orsay, and accurately sets forth French policy in this country.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

Enclosure:
Clippings from
"L'Orient" of
December 1st.

800
HSG:HT

A true copy of the signed original HT

(Enclosure to despatch No. 140 of H. S. Goold, American Consul General at Beirut, Syria, dated December 1, 1931, entitled "French Policy".)

FROM "L'ORIENT" OF BEIRUT
December 1, 1931.

L'EVOLUTION DU MANDAT SYRIEN

L'OPINION OFFICIELLE FRANÇAISE EST EXPRIMÉE DANS LE DERNIER ARTICLE DU « JOURNAL DES DÉBATS ».

" LES INTÉRÊTS FRANÇAIS DANS LE LEVANT NE SONT PAS D'ORDRE IMPÉRIAL ".

Nous avons reproduit, il y a quelques jours, une dépêche de Paris nous transmettant de courts extraits des commentaires inspirés au « Journal des Débats » *par les dernières mesures prises à Damas par M. Henri Ponsot. Voici le texte intégral de cet important article. Pour qui connaît les relations existant entre les bureaux du Quai d'Orsay et ceux du grand organe parisien, il ne peut faire de doute que l'opinion qui est exprimée dans cet article non signé ne soit l'opinion même du Cabinet de Paris. On appréciera avec quelle loyauté et quel sincère désir d'entente est envisagée à Paris l'évolution du Mandat syrien.*

Le communiqué du 22 Novembre qui a annoncé les élections syriennes pour janvier et des mesures pour qu'elles se fassent sous un pouvoir impartial, n'aura surpris aucun de ceux qui ont suivi ces dernières années la politique française en Syrie et au Liban : il a seulement montré que le mandat qui nous a été attribué sur ces pays continue à évoluer selon les lignes que lui tracent sa charte originelle et le système adopté dès le début par le mandataire.

Le Pacte de la Société des nations qui a institué le mandat en a fait un régime provisoire, une tutelle destinée à préparer des peuples mineurs à leur émancipation. L'article 1er du mandat pour la Syrie et le Liban définit cet objet en disant que « la puissance mandataire facilitera le développement progressif de la Syrie et du Liban comme Etats indépendants ». Si l'application de cette politique a été retardée par des hésitations, des erreurs, parfois même par l'incompréhension d'une partie du personnel chargé de l'appliquer et des dirigeants indigènes appelés à y collaborer, jamais son principe n'a été abandonné. Elle était en harmonie non seulement avec les idées en honneur chez nous, mais encore avec l'évolution de l'Orient contemporain et avec la nature même de nos intérêts: ceux-ci ne sont pas dans le Levant d'ordre impérial : ils consistent en une influence de culture et une expansion économique qui se sont développées en dehors de toute domination politique, et qui peuvent être sauvegardées sous des pouvoirs indigènes indépendants. L'évolution du mandat vers l'émancipation du pupille n'a donc jamais été contestée par les dirigeants de notre politique syrienne et libanaise : il ne s'est posé pour eux que des questions de méthode ou plutôt même de délais.

*
* *

L'idée constante du gouvernement mandataire a été que l'indépendance des pays qui lui étaient confiés devait être préparée par l'institution de libertés politiques sur le modèle de celles de l'Occident contemporain. On peut se demander *in abstracto* si cette conception n'anticipait pas sur l'évolution de la société des provinces de langue arabe détachées de l'Empire ottoman par la guerre, et si le régime parlementaire devait être le fondement le plus sûr de leur indépendance. Mais le fait est que, dès

(OVER)

le début, le mandataire s'est appliqué à les acheminer vers ce régime. Et l'idée se fit jour, peu à peu, de faire déterminer ses relations avec ces pays par des traités qu'il passerait avec des gouvernements émanant de leur population et habiles à contracter en son nom.

Dès 1922 et 1923, le Liban, puis les autres Etats créés sur les territoires placés sous notre mandat, étaient dotés d'assemblées consultatives, étues par le suffrage universel à deux degrés, et dont les attributions devaient être progressivement élargies. Cet élargissement intervint au Liban, dont le Conseil représentatif vota en 1926 une Constitution instituant le régime parlementaire. Il fut retardé en Syrie par le mouvement insurrectionnel qui troubla le Sud en 1925 et 1926, puis par l'intransigeance des Nationalistes syriens.

Vers la fin de la tourmente, en 1926, le Haut-Commissaire, M. de Jouvenel, avait annoncé aux Syriens qu'ils seraient appelés à élaborer leur Constitution, puis à déterminer par un traité leurs relations avec la France. C'est à son successeur, M. Ponsot, qu'il incomba d'essayer de réaliser ces promesses. La Syrie fut appelée, au printemps de 1928, à élire une Constituante. Mais il fallut ajourner, puis dissoudre cette assemblée dont les dirigeants, des nationalistes qui n'admettaient pas le Mandat et QUI NE COMPRENAIENT PAS QUE LE MOYEN DE L'ELIMINER ÉTAIT DE L'AIDER A RÉALISER SON OBJET EN COLLABORANT AVEC LUI, s'obstinèrent à vouloir introduire dans la Constitution, sans aucun correctif, des clauses qui ne tenaient aucun compte des obligations internationales du mandataire et des pouvoirs qu'elles supposent. Le Haut-commissaire tint pourtant pour valable la Constitution élaborée par l'assemblée et il la promulgua en mai 1930, après y avoir introduit une disposition transitoire réservant les devoirs et les droits du mandataire jusqu'à la fin du mandat.

* * *

L'application de cette Constitution va commencer avec les élections annoncées. C'est pour qu'elles ne soient suspectes à aucun parti que le Haut-commissaire a relevé le gouvernement provisoire dont plusieurs membres sont candidats. Il a décidé, en se réservant les pouvoirs du chef de l'Etat en matière d'élections, de jouer le rôle d'arbitre qui appartient au Mandat, et il le fera avec l'aide d'un Conseil consultatif composé de hauts personnages qui représentent toutes les tendances qui se sont manifestées ces dernières années dans la politique syrienne et qui inspireront les programmes électoraux.

Il dépend des Syriens de faire sortir des élections ainsi garanties un gouvernemement capable de passer avec le mandataire un traité d'alliance analogue à celui qui a été conclu entre l'Angleterre et l'Irak et qui réglera bientôt les relations des gouvernements de Londres et de Bagdad. C'est ce à quoi tend notre politique qui n'a pas changé d'objet, et, considéré dans la série des faits qui vient d'être rappelée, le communiqué du 22 Novembre n'annonce pas des innovations, mais simplement des étapes et une procédure arrêtées à la suite des conférences tenues cet été entre le Haut-Commissaire et le gouvernement.

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Copy to: E. I. C. Paris.

No. 661

AMERICAN CONSULATE
Jerusalem, Palestine, November 17, 1931.

From E. I. C., Paris, France

Confidential

Received by
E. I. C. Paris
NOV 24 1931 NOV 24 1931

Copies sent to
Beirut (2)

Pan-Islamic Congress.

Subject:

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
DEC - 3 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

1 Secret

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that the much advertised Pan-Islamic Congress has been definitely scheduled to be held in Jerusalem on December 7, 1931, and that the proceedings will probably last several days.

The convening of this Congress has given rise to much speculation even among Moslems, while the Jews view it with certain apprehension. The leader of the movement seems to have been El-Haj Amin Al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem. Opposition to the Congress among the Moslems of Palestine is headed by the Nashashibi family and the faction they represent, who for a number of years have been the constant opponents of the Mufti in all matters. The Mufti's greatest supporter outside of Palestine has been Shaukat Ali, the Indian Moslem leader, now a member of the Round Table Conference in London. The rumor which has been current recently that it was the intention of

the

the Congress to arrange for the reestablishment of the Caliphate and the election of the ex-Ottoman Caliph Abdul Medjid to temporal command of the Faithful, met with almost universal Moslem opposition. Further opposition to the Congress was registered in Egypt when it became known that the Congress proposed to discuss the matter of the establishment of a Moslem University in Jerusalem, the Moslems in Egypt fearing that the proposed University would constitute a rival to the famous Al-Azhar University in Cairo.

The denial by the Mufti that the Congress proposed to arrange for the reestablishment of the Caliphate and the assurances given by him to the Egyptian Prime Minister that the proposed Moslem University would in no way interfere with or detract from the Al-Azhar University, seem to have cleared the atmosphere and dispelled the greater part of Moslem opposition to the Congress, and it now seems certain that the Congress will be held and that the delegates will be numerous although, perhaps, not as representative as the promoters of the Congress might wish.

The principal subjects for discussion by the Congress will apparently be as follows:

1. The Western or Wailing Wall. The Moslems are dissatisfied with the decisions and rulings of the International Commission, whose authority they do not recognize, and will now formulate their views on the matter.
2. The defense of Palestine and its Holy Places.
3. The Hedjaz pilgrim' railway to Medina.
4. The establishment of a Moslem University in Jerusalem.
5. The unification of Islamic culture and the convocation of regular conferences in various parts of the Moslem world.

While the establishment of the Caliphate is not mentioned as one of the subjects for discussion, it is believed that some of the delegates to the Congress will make an effort to inject the subject and it would not be surprising, if this issue is raised, for the labors of the Congress to be ruined by the discord which would follow.

It is said that the proposed Congress had its inception during the summer of 1920 when many prominent Moslems were in Jerusalem in connection with the Inquiry into the Wailing Wall dispute by the International Commission appointed for that purpose. The Moslems declared at that time, and have repeated their declaration since the decision of the Wailing Wall Commission, that they could accept no ruling other than that of Moslem competency to deal with the Wailing Wall controversy. Therefore, the question of the Wailing Wall will be one of the most important of the subjects to be discussed at the Congress.

The Department is aware of the controversy which is now taking place in connection with the Hedjaz railway. The Moslems claim that this is their property and that, consequently, it cannot be taken over by the railway systems in Syria and Palestine.

While the announced reasons for the Congress are as given above, it is my considered opinion that the entire underlying motive is a move on the part of Palestine Moslems, headed by the Mufti, to draw the attention and sympathy of worldwide Moslems to Palestine, and to increase Palestine's position as a Moslem Holy Land,- and thus fortify the Moslems in their resistance to Jewish encroachment. The holding of the Congress for this purpose seems

to

to be but another step in the indicated policy, following as it does the burial in the Haram esh-Sherif area of Mohammed Ali and then,during the past summer, the burial there of Sir Sir Ronald Storrs. Likewise the establishment of a Moslem University at Jerusalem, as a counter to the Hebrew University, is another step in the carrying out of the same policy. The Moslems undoubtedly feel that if they are to put up a valid and justifiable resistance to Jewish claims for penetration and possibly even absorption of Palestine they must fortify their position by showing not only that they constitute a majority in the country and that they have inalienable vested rights in the country, but - more important than all - that Palestine is a Moslem Holy Land with innumerable and important holy shrines. The Moslem leaders realize that it is by injecting this religious aspect of the situation into the controversy that they can best secure the support not only of worldwide Moslems but of the rank and file of Moslems in Palestine.

I have a feeling that it is possible that dissensions may arise among the Moslems during the course of the Congress which may cause it to lose its effectiveness, but judging from the present political atmosphere in Palestine I am not inclined to the belief that any immediate disorders will take place as a result of the Congress.

Respectfully yours,

F. Engbenahus,
Consul General.

Copy to London Embassy.
" E. I. C., Paris.

File No. 800
FE/on

A true copy of the signed original.

Damas, le 19 Novembre 1931.

LE HAUT COMMISSAIRE DE LA REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

EN SYRIE ET AU LIBAN

A SON EXCELLENCE LE CHEIK TAJEDDINE EL HASSANI

PRESIDENT DU CONSEIL DE L'ETAT DE SYRIE.

Monsieur le Président,

A l'heure où s'ouvre pour la Syrie la période de mise en vigueur du Statut organique promulgué le 14 Mai 1930, il a paru nécessaire que le Représentant de la Puissance Mandataire assume plus directement la responsabilité qui lui appartient en vue de l'application de l'Acte de Mandat.

Ainsi prendra fin, conformément aux prévisions exposées à la Société des Nations par les Représentants qualifiés du Gouvernement Français, et approuvées par Elle, le régime provisoire qui devait précéder la mise en vigueur du Statut.

Depuis bientôt quatre ans, Votre Excellence a bien voulu me donner son concours à la tête du Gouvernement provisoire, et Elle en a assumé les charges dans l'esprit défini par les déclarations officielles, qui en avaient par avance fixé, d'accord entre nous, le cours et le terme.

.....

Nous arrivons aujourd'hui au terme de cette étape, et Votre Excellence est appelée à prendre place, avec les éminentes personnalités qui ont assumé avant Elle la charge du pouvoir depuis l'origine du Mandat, au sein du Conseil appelé à m'assister de ses avis au cours de la période où nous entrons jusqu'à l'établissement d'un Gouvernement régulier reconnu.

A cette occasion, il m'est particulièrement agréable de vous exprimer toute mon appréciation pour le concours que vous avez bien voulu m'apporter en des heures parfois difficiles dans l'accomplissement d'une tâche toujours délicate.

De libres élections pour la nomination des membres de la Chambre des Députés de Syrie auront lieu normalement dans le courant de Janvier.

Tout mon dessein est qu'elles aient lieu dans l'atmosphère la plus favorable à la confiante collaboration qui sera nécessaire, demain autant qu'aujourd'hui, pour assurer, avec le concours de toutes les bonnes volontés, le succès de l'évolution progressive du Mandat suivant les prévisions inscrites à l'Article 22 du Pacte de la Société des Nations.

.....

Votre Excellence voudra bien trouver ci-joint les trois Arrêtés, en date de ce jour, qui fixent pour cette période transitoire la répartition et les modalités d'exercice des pouvoirs./.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, l'assurance de ma plus haute considération.

Henri PONSOT.

Le Haut-Commissaire s'est rendu à Damas le 19 Novembre, accompagné de M. Helleu et des collaborateurs de son cabinet.

Il a reçu en sa résidence de Salahieh le 20 Novembre, de 9 h. à 10 h.45, le Cheikh Taggedine el Hassani, Président du Conseil de l'Etat de Syrie, et l'a ensuite accompagné au Palais du Gouvernement.

A la suite de ces entretiens, la communication suivante a été faite à la Presse./.

My visit to Damascus happened to coincide with the visit of Rustum Hider, the propagandist for a unity of Syria and Iraq under Feisal as King.

Aouni Abdel Hadi, who is an old friend of King Feisal, came ~~from~~ to Damascus from Palestine to help Rustum.

Damascus and all Syria was stirred with runors, as you must have seen in the daily papers.

Undoubtedly your Delegate at Damascus must have submitted his report, to your Majesty, about this affair.

This affair has been and still is obscure, but it might be that my conversations with Rustum, Aouni Abdel Hadi, and Fariz Bey Khoury might clear a bit of its obscurity.

Rustum Hider and the Important part of my conversation with him.

I asked him if there was anything official, coming from the French, on which we could depend. He answered that he did not know, but that he advocates an idea wanted by all, which is an Arab unity; the unity of Syria. Iraq being an important step in that direction. The question depends on the Syrians themselves. If they ask for this unity, the French will not object.

I said." Is there an official assurance that they will not object?"

He said, " As far as I know there is no official assurance."

I said, " Why don't you announce that and remove perplexity from the people's minds?"

He said, " I am not entrusted to do that: the affair is in the hands of the Syrians. The French do not object."

Then he continued, "What credit will the Syrians deserve if King Feisal enters Damascus as a King, without the Syrians themselves asking for it?"

NATIONAL PARTY

The Nationalist Party held a number of meetings. I attended one by request to be able to study about these rumors and propagandas. Those soliciting the double crown or the double monarchy tried to induce the National Party to a declaration to ask King Feisal to become King of Syria as well as Iraq.

The party refused, not owing to disapproval of the principle of unity of the two monarchies, but because it was not considered wise to take this step without the French having issued an Arrêté or made any official announcement.

When I was last in Damascus, Faris Bey Khoury, one of the leaders of the National Party, was on his way back from Paris. His party was awaiting his arrival to find out what news he had for them. They have full trust in Faris Bey Khoury, but not in Rustum Hider or other Feisal propagandists.

Rustum Hider returned to Iraq in despair as he had hoped that his propaganda would have better success with the Nationalists.

But the Nationalists are abiding their time, while they approve of the principle of unity they fear lest the French should be launching a policy of separation in order to divide them and weaken their resistance which will result in their failure in the coming elections, when M. Ponsot calls for it at the end of the month. Accordingly they are prudent and cautious and hold to the Constitution which they made three years ago in which they decided to have a republican Government.

Aouni Abdel Hadi-

We traveled together in a motor car, from Damascus to Beirut- His conversation was principally this:

That he had a special interview with King Feisal during the latter's visit to Palestine, and was informed by the King about what had taken place during the official banquet which was given by the President of the French Republic.

The King stated to Aouni, that M. Berthelot stood up (an important personality in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) drank

to the health of King Feisal, King of Iraq and Syria. I was, for a moment dumbfounded but in my answer to his statement I said a word showing my approval and acceptance (took the minister at his word).

Aouni said: " Sir, don't confuse me; this is a great affair; it is a dream that if realized is a mercy of God."

Feisal said: As I told you, I was confused at first, but in my subsequent conversation with Briand and others I was convinced that they are sincere and are willing."

Aouni hurried to Damascus to assist Rustum in his endeavors.

He never stated that he came at the advice of King Feisal and he may have been pushed by what was rumored and what he had heard, he being a Nationalist who is interested in the Arab question and I believe that Youssif knows him and can give you more information regarding him.

Faris Bey Khoury;

Left for Paris three months ago, and had many conversations with ~~many~~ responsible persons, as was mentioned in the papers and then denied, and other things never published, but what is certain is that Faris Bey arrived in Beirut two days ago(he being a good friend of mine) we met and talked. I informed him of the endeavors of Rustum and his contradicting answers. He stated that Rustum was not authorized by any one to make these statements or exert any efforts, in this direction

But Faris Bey, in his conversation, did not deviate from the substance of Rustum's statements that the affair depends on the Syrians themselves, and what they decide regarding form of Government, the French will accept. I asked him if there was anything official coming from the French Government upon which one could depend. He did not say " I don't know" as Rustum had said, but replied; " No declaration can be made now as any announcement will be premature." His words regarding the subject of unity,- unity of the two countries is identical with those of Rustum, also

with those of Aouni and with those of the elect . All seemed to have learned the same lesson from the same instructor..

I related to Faris Bey the incident told to me by Aouni regarding King Feisal- meaning the story of the Official banquet of the President. He denied it emphatically and said that it was a falsehood, thinking that King Feisal would never have said it.

Who is the liar?

Then Faris Bey stated that the French changed their opinion about Feisal and have great respect and veneration for him and would like to cooperate with him in settling the Syrian question, and to have thorugh him their prestige more effective an their interests more protected in the Arab world.

It seems from what has been mentioned that;-

1) There is a mutual agreement or an understanding about the Feisal propaganda to unite the two countries, Syria and Iraq.

2) The National Party is perplexed and disturbed and I cannot tell what their stand will be after metting Faris Bey Khoury. If he does not carry in his bag more than Rustum Hider and other notables, I do not think that he will succeed in changing the present stand of his brothers, the Nationalists. They might hold to their stand until the arrival of M. Pomsot and the appointment of the date of the elections.

3) The agreement of the propagandists might be based on some thing official or semi official but are tied by a promise of secrecy to the French.

4) May be that Feisal fears the allegation that he went to Paris to work openly for his brother Aly, but secretly for himself, therefore, he tries to have the Syrians themselves ask for him and exert their efforts for his coming.

5) It may be that the French are anxious to have Feisal but refuse to be the instigators in getting him to Damascus after ousting him eight years ago.

Rustum wanted to know my opinion in the matter. I said;

" I am before anything else a believer in the"all Arab Empire" and unity, big or small is a step towards the big unity."

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, Dec. 4, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
DEC - 5 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

H. S. Goold, Esquire,.
American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

800

Sir:

I have the honor to attach herewith a short political
1/ report about the most interesting events for the period ending December 3, 1931.

I have the honor to be Sir;

always at your service,

very respectfully yours.

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

800
Enclosure;
1/ as stated.

POLITICAL REPORT
Period ending Dec. 3, 1931.

****

Change of Government.

The new status created by the mandatory government on Nov. 21, 1931, is now in application, the French advisers are now everything in the government, administrative matters are running in their proper chanels. Cheik Tajeldin left the city temporarily for Beirut, the Administrative Council of Advice did not yet meet nor is called to do so.

Minister of Colonies.

The French Minister of Colonies arrived in Damascus by a plane from Bagdad, he arrived on Nov. 28, 1931 before noon, an official reception was made to him on his arrival, then he attended to a military review, a launch was given to him in the French residence, this was reserved for French officials and officers, on 4.00 P.M. of the same day a tea banquet was given in Azem Palace to which was invited a large crowd of natives and foreigners but on this occasion there was some talk of criticise as there was written on the card of invitation "pour avoir l'honneur" of meeting etc. On Nov. 29, morning this minister left for Beirut. M. Ponsot and his wife came from Beirut the reception.

Elections.

The political work of the city at present is the matter of the forthcoming elections, private meetings and preparations are being made everywhere, it is said that the French are working very seriously for a certain list of candidates in the north, it is said also that they like to transfer the election of the Jewish and Greek Catholic members to Aleppo instead of Damascus and the Greek Orthodox member to Hama just leaving for Damascus 10 moslem members.

Monarchist Meeting.

The monarchist group made a large meeting on Nov. 27, 1931, to which came about 700 attendants, five persons spoke and asided the monarchist system and made public their programme stating that they are working for one of the late King Hussien 's sons.

The Doublefold Crown.

Practically the rumor of the doublefold crown of King Feisal for Irak and Syria has gone to sleep, people here begun to fear that the French future programme in Syria is rather far from being favourable from a nationalist point of view.

New College.

M. Ponsot and a numbe r of French and Syrian officials inaugurated on Nov. 25, 19 31, the opening of a new building for the French Mission Laique, this building is large and is situated in Bagdad avenue, the land was presented to the mission by the Syrian government and the funds for the building from France.

Nationalists Meeting.

The nationalist group ElKitleh Watanieh is helding a conference at Damascus for the Study of the situation but no declaration is being made yet about their findings. It is rumored in this connection that the Kitleh is divided upon itself as some members and especially tho se of Aleppo do not wish to participate in the elections and their programme to boycotte such elections. however all of them want to have some trust for the safety of the balloting as they pretend that in the second run of 1928 elections the box of ballots was stollen and replaced by a similar one containing false elections. It is said that Hashem bey Attasy will interview M. Ponsot and explain to him the situation.

M. Solomiac.

The most important fact that is made yet by M. Solomiac is his many receptions to many classes of natives such as notables farmers, landlords, christ ians, kurds, merchants etc. Everyday he attends in the afternoon the affairs of the Syrian Government in the Serail.

Formation of Political Groups.

There still a large activity for the formation of political groups and adherents are seeked everywhere but those which peepped publicly are the Kitlef, Hezb el Islah and the Monarchists. I beleive will appear in the near future the Mithakiin and the Osbeh Watanieh.

Joseph Dabbouss.

NO. 146

File Copy

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 11, 1931.

SUBJECT: Elections.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

The Syrian elections will take place on the 20th of this month and the 4th of next January, and the Nationalists will participate. At the first election the people will choose electors who will foregather on the 5th proximo to make the definite choice of deputies in the new Syrian Chamber.

M. Ponsot is waging his electoral campaign with very considerable energy. On the 8th of the month, the Advisory Council, created by one of his decrees of the 19th of last month, met, all members being present, with the exception of the Nationalist leader, Hachim Atassi, who excused himself just before the session began.

At the meeting, M. Ponsot reminded the members of the Council that he had often expressed the view that Franco-Syrian relations should permanently be placed on the basis of a treaty:

"I made the first declaration to this effect on the 28th of February 1928, just before the last elections, and I repeated it on the 14th of May in transmitting the Constitution to M. Aristide Briand, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

"It

"It has not been my fault that these ideas have not been put into effect sooner.

"I explained my position before the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations on the 30th of June 1920, and if you will refer to this memorandum published in the records of the 10th session (Pages 130 and 139), you will note that my habitual silence is not based on indifference, and understands when important exceptions should be made.

"Since then the policy of the treaty has made progress in France as well as at Geneva. As evidence of this I refer to the remarkable report presented by M. Paganon to the French Chamber of Deputies on the occasion of the debate on the Foreign Office budget."

After referring to the position taken by the French Government at Geneva before the Permanent Mandates Commission on June 11th, and before the Council on September 4th, last, M. Ponsot went on:

"The electoral period will open tomorrow. I propose to have the first voting on the 20th of December and the second on the 5th of January.

"The elections should permit of the formation of a regular government qualified to engage in the negotiation of the treaty to fix the definite relations between France and Syria.

"As a matter of fact, it is with the authorized representatives of Syria, and with them alone, that the High Commissioner of the French Republic can carry on a negotiation which will permit of the attainment of an accord equally satisfactory to all parties.

"It would have been premature, as well as little in conformity with constitutional principles, to open such a discussion by informal conversations. But the profound study of all the international as well as national aspects of the problem which I made both at Paris and Geneva, allows me today to repeat my previous declaration, with the feeling that a rapid agreement - which will, however, take into consideration the necessary steps - will hereafter be possible IF THE GOVERNMENT CREATED BY THE ELECTIONS IS ANIMATED BY A DISPOSITION ANALOGOUS TO OURS.

"One of the principal designs which I had in view in creating the Council which brings you together today, was to be able to freely explain myself before you, feeling sure that only open discussion would allow of the elevation of individual points of view to the level of the general interest.

"Multiple

"Multiple questions have been brought before the public.

"Questions have been raised, as for instance, whether the present political operation would suffice, of itself, without previously giving or promising certain satisfactions which there is no need to make more definite before persons as well informed as you (Here M. Poincaré referred to the Nationalists' desire to know the terms of the treaty to be presented).

"THERE IS NOTHING NEW AS TO THESE PROBLEMS. THEY HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BUSINESS BEFORE US. THEY DO NOT BELONG TO THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

"TO-DAY IT IS A QUESTION OF THE ELECTIONS.

"On this matter I say clearly that whatever imperfection there is in the present electoral system - and many criticisms could be made by anyone who has had any experience on the subject, - it is more just to maintain this known system, practised for a long time, than to change it today contrary to constitutional provisions, in order to give satisfaction to interests however respectible they are.

"The important thing is the atmosphere in which the elections shall take place, and it was in some manner to raise it above party that I have invited you to this meeting, desirous of indicating that the Mandatory Power, in spite of the unavoidable course of events, does not forget services rendered to the country and appeals to the good will of all of you to establish, on an unbreakable basis, the friendly and confident relations which ought to unite France and Syria for their good, and their common prosperity.

"From the political equilibrium which we seek, other benefits will result. The least of them will not be the ability to work more actively, with the guarantees of necessary security, in the economic and social domain which interests the entire mass of the nation.

"In this work it would be convenient that the municipalities, administrative councils, chambers of commerce and chambers of agriculture, up to now too little associated with the conduct of public affairs of an economic and social nature, should collaborate where their action would produce fruitful results.

"In expressing this hope, I have no doubt what your reply will be.

"With reference to the great projects which I have just mentioned, it only remains to us today to regulate technical questions concerning the elections.

"Here

"There are the texts of the bills drawn to call the electoral college together, and to fix the number of deputies and the religious communities to which they should belong in conformity with the law in force."

One of the bills fixes the number of deputies to be elected as sixty-nine, and apportions them as follows: To the Sunnites, fifty-one; to the minorities, fourteen; and to the Nomads, four.

The most interesting thing about the meeting of the Advisory Council was the absence of the Nationalist representative, Hashim Atassi. Only five minutes before the meeting, he sent his excuses to M. Solomine, the Delegate of the High Commissioner and now the executive head of the Syrian Government. What were the reasons for his abstention, and did it portend a Nationalistic boycott of the elections? The only paper whose comment has come to my attention was "El-Yom" which set forth the following reasons for Hashim's absence:

"1. He had been nominated to the Council without his consent.

"2. The powers of the Council had not been defined nor its role specified.

"3. The Council was made up of former high officials who had never been anything but the creatures of the French Authority and whom the Nation considers responsible for all the ills it has suffered from the beginning of the occupation. With these personalities, the President of the Nationalist block, who had the confidence of the Nation, could hardly collaborate."

And then "El-Yom" added this rather hopeful comment:

"The natural attitude of Hashim Bey will not necessarily influence that of the Party with reference to participation in the elections."

But the Nationalists were to debate the position for two days more (they have been in session in Damascus for over

a week

a week and a half now) before coming to a decision, and this was only reached last night. And although they have not succeeded in making the French disclose the terms of the treaty which is to be presented to the National Government after the elections, and although no amnesty has been granted to political deportees or any assurances given them relative to territorial changes,- in spite of everything - they have decided to participate, and it is practically sure that they sweep the country.

> "We have attentively examined the declaration made by the French Delegate to the League of Nations, those made last week at Damascus by the French representative, as well as all the previous declarations of the French Authority" states the manifesto. "They all contemplate the substitution of the unilateral charter of the Mandate by a bilateral treaty to be negotiated with the deputies of the Syrian Nation whom the next elections will designate, without otherwise defining the bases of this treaty nor the rights which it will confer on Syria.
>
> "It is in vain that we have attempted to lift the veil which surrounds this project before the beginning of the electoral period, in order to fix upon the purposes to be attained. But in spite of the darkness and uncertainty, although no reply has been made as to the National claims, in spite of the important number of Syrian citizens to whom the right of re-entry into their country is always refused, in spite of the many vices of the present electoral law, in spite of the maintenance of administrative methods which might well cause doubts as to the freedom of the elections, although no concessions have been granted to us in these particulars, we have nevertheless reached the conclusion that patriotic duty forbids us to be absent from the battle which opens and on which the entire future of the Nation may depend.
>
> "It is with these feelings that we have decided, all of us united to serve our country, to invite the Nation to take part in the elections with us.
>
> "We agree hereafter to respond to every loyal and sincere gesture from the French side by a gesture even more sincere and loyal."

This was the language of the Party declaration, but Hashim Atassi, the leader, issued a call of his own. For

the

the most part it made the same points as the Party declaration and added the statement that if the elections are conducted without intervention or pressure, the assembly will be entirely composed of persons with a pure past who will know how to work for the country and defend it against evil. And then I think Khalil Atassi came to the essence of the case;

"According to the program traced by the High Commissioner, we are going to enter into a period of a bilateral treaty which the deputies of the Nation will negotiate. IF THIS TREATY DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE AND DOES NOT REALIZE THE NATIONAL CLAIMS, IF LIKEWISE IT DAMAGES THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EVOLUTION OF THE COUNTRY, IT WILL HAVE BROUGHT ON AN EVEN GRAVER SITUATION, AND WE SHALL GO FROM BAD TO WORSE."

It is always a dangerous thing to engage in prophecy, but I think it eminently safe to say that in the absence of what might euphemistically be termed "manoeuvres", the Nationalists will return the great body of deputies to the new chamber (Mr. Dabbouss, our "man on the spot", telephoned from Damascus this evening saying that the situation was obscure and that no prophecy should be hazarded). It would be very much against their truer interests for the French to be anything but entirely impartial in the conduct of the elections. A mere suspicion of manipulation might bring on highly inconvenient consequences. I leave this phase aside and assume a smashing National victory. We shall then reach the treaty stage, and I believe that the treaty to be presented to the new Syrian Government is now in the safe in the office of the Political Director of the High Commission here. And with what I have already reported to you concerning French intentions (my despatch No. 87 of

October

October 3rd and subsequent correspondence with Mr. Murray). It is indeed hard to see how there can be any meeting of minds between the French and the National Government; but on attacking a unified Syria. Someone will have to give a great deal of ground, and if the Nationalist leaders and the rank and file are imbued with the spirit of Habib Ajami, I am afraid we are in for what he calls "an open career of battle" and that "we shall go from bad to worse".

But there are plenty of Syrians and Europeans all over the country, backed by units of the latest model handled by Frenchmen, and I cannot believe that the revulsing malaise (from a treaty impasse) will spread to the domain of action.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. Cecil,
American Consul General.

Distribution:

Original and four copies to the Department.
One copy to American Library, Istanbul.
One copy to U.S.I.S., American Cen Library, Paris.

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NEA:HK

A true copy of the signed original

AMERICAN CONSULATE - GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

Telegram Sent

Confirmation - File - Voucher Copy - True Text

Secstate

Washington

December 11 - 3:00 p.m. Elections set for December 20 and January 5 The Nationalists will participate

Goold

December 11, 1931.

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

DESTINATION OF TELEGRAM: Washington, D. C.,
United States of America.

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, December 12, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
DEC 15 1931
BEIRUT, SYRIA

Confidential.

H. S. Goold, Esquire.

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Dear Sir;

I have the honor to enclose herewith a short political
1/ report about the situation in this district for the week ending Dec. 10, 1931.

I have the honor to be Sir;

always at your service,

Very respectfully yours.

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

Enclosure;
1. Political news report.

800

Political Report
Week ending
December 10, 1931.

****

El Kitleh's Conference.

The said confere nce ended on Dec. 4, 1931 the study of the situation was terminat ed by presenting to the French a list of demands relative to the elections and what will follow to the elections as regard the proposed treaty. M. Ponsot came to Damascus on Dec. 3, 1931 and found the atmosphre no-t helping for political discusions he left early morning of Dec. 4, to Djebel Druse and replied to to the nationalists demands through a newspaper that the Kitleh has a member in the Council of Advice and this member xx can propose whatever he likes. Afterwards there was rumor in the city that the national ists will boycott the elections.

Meeting of the Council of Advice.

The Council of Advice was called to meeting on Dec. 4, 1931 and the meeting took place on Dec. 7, 1931 in the beforenoon, all the members attended except Hashem bey Attasy the delegate of the Nationalists. M. Ponsot made a speech in this meeting showing the F rench scheme im the present and future. Damad Ahmed Namy bey taked with the H. C. and talled him that he should arrange in a diplomacy for Hashem bey to attend the meeting saying that all other solution of the Syrian problem in which the nationalists do not participate will have no value and wil l be temporary, I learned that this is made by the Damad because of his hatred to M. Ponsot and in order to criticise his situation.

Speech of M. Ponsot.

Herewith I attach a French copy of the text of the French H.C. speech made in the Council of Advice on Dec. 7, 1931.

The Nationalists will participate in the elections.

It is rumored here by the adverse side of the Kitleh that the French aggreed with the Nationalist to give then 4 seats in Damascus, 1 in Homs, 1 in Hama and 1 in Aleppo out of t total number of 69 seats of the parliment. The nationalists pretend that though they h ave no security about the safegard of the balloting boxes and watching of the election operation but they enter into the election battle in order to show the nation that they remain following its interest to the end. Whether that or that, a fact, is that the Kitleh Watanieh or the nationalists will part-icipate in the forthcoming lections, without any restriction.

Hashem bey's Proclamation.

The nationalists made through thier chairman Hashem bey a certain proclamation in which they show some history and what they propose to do. a French translation of this proclamation is sent to you herewith but I would advice that if this to be kept or used as a reference it should be translated from Arabic its language to English.

Arrete No. 6.

There is published here Arrete No. 6, in which is fixed the date of the first degree elections to be on Dec. 20, 1931, and the second degree elections on January 5, 1932.

Arrete No 7.

Arrete No. 7, appeared and fixes the number of the Syrian Parliment by 69 members divid ed as follows.

No.	
17	Damascus and subur bs.
22	Aleppo and suburbs
6	Homs " "
3	Hama " "
3	Hauran " "
6	Deir el Zor "
2	El Jazira (North east of Syria.)
6	Alexabdretta district.
4	Bedwins.
69	Total
	As to division for minorities and religions we have.
55	Moslem Sennite.
3	" Alawy
1	" Ismaili
59	
3	Christians. Armenian Orthodox.
1	" " Catholics.
2	" Greek Orthodox.
1	" " Catholics.
1	" Syriac. Orthodox.
1	" " Catholics.
1	Jew.
69	Total.

Preparation for the elections.

These days it is very busy time for all those who will participate in the elections. The government is making its task and so is the political groups. No predictions can be made as to who will gain but my personal opinion is that the government will loose undoubtedly if they present for electors a list of persons having no political v alue before the public such as Cheik Tajeldin and the personels of his government. The registratio of candidated for membership has not yet begun and no candidate is is known officially.

Two sparks of a fire.

1. While the people were praying in the Ommayad Mosque a speaker of the monarchist g roup spoke and defended the Monarch system another of the nationalists of the Kitleh Watanieh showted and called him to keep his mouth shut but he was attacked by the group of the monarchist speaker and badly beaten this made a certain anarchy in the mosque and the matter was going to enlarge.

2. There was a match of football between two clubs of sportsmen, one is nationalists of the Istklal party now Kitleh and the other to the monarchist and Dr. Shabander at the end of the play there was some hurrays and when the Name of Dr. Shabander passed the nationalist group of players whisled and the young men called each other for fig ht, wise people interfered and dismissed the matter.

I cited the two storie s as to show how the public is interested.

The Islamic Conference.

Some delegates left Damascus to attend the Moslen conference that was opened in Jerusalem on Dec. 5, 1931. Those who were interested the most in this conference are those who belong to the Istiklal party which work for a panIslamic movement.

Visit to Djebel Druse.

M. Ponsot suddenly visited Soueda in Djebel Druse and was in his reception the most important notable of Djebel Druse and there was presented to him the demands of the Druses of which is there self independence. This visit took place on Dec. 4, 1931 and in the afternoon M. Ponsot left for Beirut through the south. This visit is said was made in order to avoid interviewing Hashem bey Attasy and listen to his demand of precautions.

Visit to the North.

M. Ponsot came to Da mascus on Dec. 6 and left for the visit of the north on Dec. 8. during his stay in Damascus he signed some arretes for the r un of the elections.

Joseph Dabbouss.

Baghdad, Iraq, December 16, 1931.

Diplomatic Series No. 98

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
JAN
BEIRUT, SYRIA

S. I. G.
JAN 4 1932
Copies sent to
London
Beirut

From E. I. C., Paris. Fr.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a report covering in brief form political happenings in the Kingdom of Iraq during the first half of December.

Kemal Conference at Jerusalem.

It is reported in the Baghdad press that a Shia Moslem, Mohamed el Sadr, one of the most prominent leaders of that sect in Iraq, consented to the request of Congress that he should lead the Friday prayers to unite Moslems at Palestine in one of their mosques. This action appeared to creat a great deal of interest in Baghdad for the reason

that

that it was considered to be an indication pointing to a possible approach of unity between those two seats.

Trial of Abul Isir Tak al Mudhafar.

The trial of ex-Mutasarrif of Yarul, Abul Isir Beg Mudhafar, has continued during the first two weeks of December, but in camera. The only thing known by the public is that the court, after the preliminary hearing, decided that he should be charged under Article 153 of the Baghdad Penal Code, under which article any official misappropriating government money may be punished with seven years imprisonment or a fine. The prosecution in this case has now been heard and the defence will produce its witnesses during the next week.

Iraq and the League of Nations.

BAGHDAD AL AHD, a daily Arabic newspaper, published an item recently to the effect that Iraq's candidature will be considered by the Council of the League of Nations on January 17th and that it is expected that the Council will support the candidature unanimously. The paper stated, however, that the Assembly of the League would not consider the question of Iraq's membership until next August.

The return of Ex-King Ali.

On December 10th, Ex-King Ali, the elder brother of King Faisal, returned from Trans-Jordania. The Department will remember that Ex-King Ali suddenly left Baghdad for Amman shortly after King Faisal's return from Europe, and this newspaper reported that

he would remain there as the guest of his younger brother all winter. The Department was also informed that Nuri Pasha described his hasty trip to Ankara to the ill feeling between the two brothers over the question of the Syrian throne. But things in the situation has brought Ex-King Ali back to Baghdad cannot be reported at present.

Nuri Pasha's Visit to Europe.

Nuri Pasha, the Prime Minister, left by air-plane for Damascus on December 15th en route to Turkey. He took with him the Director General of Finance and Director of the Commercial Department of the Ministry of Finance, because the object of this visit to Angora is to conclude a treaty of commerce and ben volonge between Turkey and Iraq. The opposition papers are not pleased with this trip of the Prime Minister, claiming that his presence is not needed either in Geneva nor in Angora and that he is spending Govern-ment money for his own pleasure without any thought of the state.

The Insane Superstition.

At the present time in the criminal court, there is a trial going on which shows the superstitious character of the people. Some weeks ago a young student, who was suffering from a serious illness, was taken by his mother to a charlatan sheikh for treatment. The sheikh alleged that the boy was possessed of an evil spirit and beat him so severely in attempting to drive the evil spirit out that he died from his injuries.

The

The Visit of Mr. Paul [redacted].

The Government has been informed of the intended visit of an American educational commission headed by Mr. Paul Monroe. Al ISTIKLAL, an Arabic daily paper in commenting upon this visit made the following statement: "Mr. Monroe is identified with an educational policy which he put into practice in the Philippine Islands and which had for its object the diversion of the attention of the natives of that American colony from intellectual and spiritual matters to questions which were exclusively material, such as farming and animal breeding. He will bring with him the material spirit which leads to the destruction of the national spirit and he will weaken our national pride by pre-occupation in purely material affairs. The mere fact that he has volunteered to undertake this mission proves it surely enough to make us feel that he will introduce a destructive policy."

A New Bridge for Mosul.

A new steel bridge is to be built across the Tigris River at Mosul, and contracts for the necessary material at a total cost of 10,000 pounds sterling, f.o.b. have been awarded by the Crown Agents in London acting on behalf of the Iraq Government. The total length of steel work on this bridge is 484 feet, and there will be a masonry causeway approach of 456 feet on the left bank of the river and of 250 feet on the right bank. The width of the bridge roadway will be 18 feet and the road level will be 8 feet 6 inches above high flood mark. The work of erection

is to be carried out by the Public Works Department and the material has been bought from English firms.

Iraq's Agricultural Exhibition.

An agricultural and industrial exhibition will be held in Baghdad next March under the patronage of His Majesty, King Faisal. The primary object of the exhibition is to make an effective display of the national products of the country and to provide facilities for the agricultural and industrial communities of Iraq to advertise their goods. Foreign firms represented by agencies in the country will also have the same facilities for advertisement and display as Iraqi firms.

The Syrian Iraq Frontier.

It is reported in the Baghdad papers that the Council of the League of Nations will send a commission of three members, who, with the assistance of two British and two French officers will study the question of the boundaries between Syria and Iraq in the Sinjar area. An important Christian priest of the Mosul district, Monseigneur Thayat, informed me recently that French officials along the frontier in the Sinjar area make no secret of their desire to include within the boundaries of Syria the entire country inhabited by the Yezidis. Monseigneur Thayat also informed me that a rumor was current in the House of Deputies recently to the effect that King Faisal had been officially advised, while in Syria, to make no opposition to French desires to include that whole area within Syria as, if he became King of Syria, he would

still

still have under his domination this highly mixed-blood area.

Cholera in Iraq and in Persia.

The reports of the Health Directorate of Iraq show that cholera has practically been eliminated from the country. While an occasional case is reported among the desert tribes or marsh Arabs, no cases have been reported for some weeks in the towns or cities of the southern part of the country.

On the other hand it is believed in Iraq that cholera has spread over Khuzistan and Khuzistan in southern Persia. As a consequence, Iraqi officials are prohibiting all pilgrim or corpse traffic into Iraq from any section of Persia south of Khanaqin on the Iraq-Persian border. Travelers entering Iraq from any district of Persia south of that area must be in possession of inoculation certificates showing two inoculations given at an interval of at least five days apart. Travelers not conforming with these requirements will be inoculated upon arrival and may be quarantined for a period of at least five days.

The Ja'fun Trial.

The Department has been informed of the murder of Abdullah Beg al Jaf, Director General of the Ministry of Interior by Abdullah Faik al Ja'fun and the latter's trial in criminal court. Many attempts were made to force the courts of Iraq to try the murderer by Tribal Law and it is said that even King Ibn Saud, the Shaikh of Kuwait, the Sultan of Muscat, the Shaikh of Koweit, were among the prominent

men

men called the country who protested against the trial of this man by the criminal court. None of these petitions were successful, due, it is rumored, to Sir K. Cornwallis, the Adviser of the Ministry of Interior. This official appeared to be determined that Tribal Law did not enter into this case and is said to have stated that he would resign his office if the murderer were not tried in the criminal courts.

The counsel for the defendant spoke some hours on the real notions of really honor and the strict code which made the murder necessary. The counsel also spoke for some time on Abdullah el Faih's power and prestige among the tribes of Iraq and very thinly veiled a threat against the State were the prisoner not to be tried by Tribal Law. He stated that Abdullah Faih was a great chieftain who was followed by 10,000 warriors if necessity demanded. He stated that the Turkish Government was so afraid of the prisoner that they had him elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies in Constantinople. He added that the British, when they occupied the country, were afraid of the power this man wielded and confiscated all his property in order that he would not be in a position to foment a revolt. In spite of the counsel for defense's speech, the court, which was under the presidency of Mr. Richard, an English judge, sentenced the prisoner to death under Article 418 of the Baghdad Penal Code. As the death sentence must be approved by His Majesty prior to its execution, it is thought that this will give King Faisal an opportunity which

he

he will exist to survive slavery and to relive the existence he once knew Government.

"lost" officials.

The Department has been informed that many former servants of the Iraq Government had been discharged in an endeavour to reduce Government expenses and had been placed on the pension list; and that these officials were in dire straits for money and had petitioned the Government for some relief. On December 15th, the Chamber of Deputies allocated the sum of Rs.120,000 to compensate Iraqi officials whose appointments have been terminated, due to retrenchment schemes, and a further sum of Rs.60,000 as compensation for certain foreign officials whose services have also been terminated.

The Adjournment of Parliament.

On December 14th, Parliament was adjourned by Royal Irade for a month. As members of Parliament do not draw their salaries unless Parliament is in session, the measure appears to have been taken for reasons of economy, as at the present time there is no important legislation to be carried through.

The Finding of Oil in Iraq Criticised Formally.

AL AHALI AL WATANI, a daily Arabic newspaper, has printed a statement that it has been informed by the Minister of Economics and Communications that Iraq Petroleum Company had decided to proceed with its work and has made a preliminary allotment of 2,250,000 pounds sterling for that purpose.

As the Department had been informed, Mr. Satchell, who is in charge of the production of that company and who has recently visited the fields at Firuk, is my authority for the statement that the company's program of work will be decided at an important conference which will be held in London on December 17th.

Political Issue.

The Department was informed some time ago of the resignation of Jamil Beg al Midfa'ee from the ranks of the Ali party and from the presidency of the Chamber of Deputies and that his resignation was followed by the resignation of half of his supporters from the Government party. Nuri Pasha seems to have been able to quell this opposition within the Party as the members who needed have recently decided to return to the ranks. They were welcomed back at a meeting held at Ali headquarters on December 2nd., at which time the proposal to re-elect Jamil Beg al Midfa'ee to the presidency of the Chamber of Deputies was carried by acclamation.

Respectfully yours,

Alexander K. Sloan.

File No. 890
AKS/JG

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Original and four copies to Department;
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Copy to American Embassy, Istanbul, Turkey;
Copy to U. S. C., Paris, France.

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AJG.

Copy to: E. I. C. Paris.

No. 664

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,

Jerusalem, Palestine, December 17, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
DEC 31
BEIRUT, SYRIA

From E. I. C., Paris, France

Received by
E. I. C. Paris
DEC 23 1931
Copies sent to
London (3)
Berne
Rome

Subject: Islamic Conference.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my despatch No. 660 of November 17, 1931, reporting in connection with the Islamic Conference which had been arranged to take place in Jerusalem beginning December 7, 1931, and now to report further with regard to this Conference which has just drawn to a close.

As had been expected, the delegates to this congress (144) were less in number than had been hoped for by the organizers, and they were also of less importance individually than the organizers had likewise hoped. As was also anticipated, the Arab opposition in Palestine to the chief instigator of the congress, Haj Amin Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, made strenuous efforts to bring about disunion and to ruin the effectiveness of the congress. With this object in view they held an opposition congress in Jerusalem on Friday, December 11th, 1931, which was attended by probably 1500 persons.

800

among them were the mayors of many cities and towns of Palestine and representatives of important Moslem families and large land owners, as well as numerous other notables of the towns and villages. This opposition was not so much against the objects forming the agenda of the other congress, as it was in opposition to the Mufti himself. The organizers of the opposition congress hoped to bring about dissension among the delegates to the Mufti's congress and cause many of them to withdraw, but in this they failed. Aside from two Egyptian members of the original congress, who caused a disturbance at the opening meeting and who were expelled from the Congress, the delegates to the Mufti's congress remained loyal and stayed until the work of the congress was brought to a conclusion.

It is yet too early to predict the ultimate outcome of the congress, in respect to its influence upon and acceptance by world-wide Moslems. The present congress has made plans for similar congresses to be held periodically in the future. It was decided at the instigation of the Mufti that the members of the present congress shall automatically be members of future congresses. It is believed that the Mufti manipulated this in order to make certain that he would be re-elected upon each occasion as the President of the Congress, and be the dominant personality. While it is entirely possible that as a result of this first congress others will follow, it may be possible that world-wide Moslem influence will participate in future congresses only under conditions which might not be entirely satisfactory to the Mufti.

I repeat the assertion made in my former despatch that in my opinion this congress in particular, and possibly even the future congresses, are intended by the Moslems more or less as propaganda in a policy of endeavoring to give Palestine an enhanced value and importance as a Moslem holy country, in order to counteract the Jewish efforts to develop Palestine as a Jewish state. Undoubtedly the present congress has in some measure accomplished the intended purpose in this respect, for it has at least focused the attention of the Moslem world on Palestine and has made better known to the Moslem world the Arab-Jewish controversy.

Without doubt the present congress can be looked upon as a real beginning of organized effort on the part of the Moslem Arabs of Palestine to oppose further Jewish incursions. While the Jews have observed a considerable amount of reserve in their public utterances in connection with the congress, there is no doubt that they are probably even more apprehensive now than they were before the opening of the congress,- and especially so since the evening session of December 13th when the Wailing Wall was discussed so vehemently by the delegates. At this meeting it was decided that the delegates would visit the Wailing Wall and there take a solemn oath to defend it with their lives and their blood. However, in view of police measures taken no demonstrations were permitted at the Wall and no incidents occurred.

On December 19th I am proceeding on two weeks leave of absence. Upon my return and during the month of

January

January 1 will prepare and forward to the Department a full report of the proceedings of the congress as well as of the opposition congress, giving them the official versions of the resolutions taken which are not at the moment available.

Respectfully yours,

F. Knabenshue,
Consul General.

Copy to: American Embassy, London.
U. S. D. Paris.

File No. 800
FK/oh

A true copy of the signed original. OSA

NO. 154

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

DEC 18 1931

SUBJECT: DRUZES WANT INDEPENDENCE - FROM SYRIA.

800

THE HONORABLE Summer Welles

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

At the same time as I forwarded my despatch No. 146 of December 11th, telling you of the dates of the elections and that the Nationalists had decided to participate, I should have forwarded another despatch informing you that, on the 4th instant, M. Ponsot visited Soueida in the Djebel Druze, and summoning the representative Council of that district, made a little speech in which he praised the loyalty of the Druze to the Mandate.

In thanking M. Ponsot for his interest in the Druze, the Emir Hassan El Atashi handed him a document containing the claims of his people. These claims are as follows:

"1. Preservation of the independence of the Djebel proclaimed in 1922 and confirmed in 1930.

"2. Direct dependence of the Djebel on the High Commission for all political and administrative matters.

"3. Protection of the frontiers and the restoration to the Djebel of the four villages which had been detached from it."

M. Ponsot

M. Ponsot promised to take these demands into consideration and, indeed, they fit so well into the French scheme for making a treaty with the State of Syria on the basis of its present boundaries, that one might be justified in thinking that the démarche of the Emir had been inspired.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

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One copy to American Embassy, Istanbul.

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NO. 156

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 19, 1931.

SUBJECT: Nationalists in Difficulties.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

The first and, I believe, the most important stage of the Syrian electoral campaign comes to a close today. To-morrow the "first degree" election takes place. It has been a strange affair, this electoral campaign. If any of the parties (I believe they are now reduced to three, Nationalist, Monarchist and Government) have put forth their lists of candidates for the post of electors, I have heard nothing of it. Not a word of it has appeared in the press. And we are less than twenty-four hours from the vote. There has been violence and fighting in both Damascus and Aleppo, and either the Syrian Nationalists are somewhat like Mr. Kipling's Banderlog who "boast and chatter and pretend that they are a great people about to do great affairs in the jungle, but the falling of a nut turns their minds to laughter, and all is forgotten," or M. Solomiac, formerly the Delegate of the High Commissioner in Damascus and now the actual head of the Government there, is a very clever man. Wise men in Beirut chuckle and give the Frenchman the entire credit for the state of obscurity

into

into which the whole business seems to have been thrown, but there must be something lacking in tenacity of purpose, in the power of concentration of the patriots of the interior. For at the present writing, it looks very doubtful whether the Nationalists will gain the majority they would normally be expected to win.

Now, it happens that very many of the personnel of the Police and the Gendarmerie of the State of Syria were appointed to their respective posts by Sheik Tajjedine, former head of the Provisional Government, and, of course, a friend of the French. Fakhry Bey Baroody, one of the Hotspurs of the Nationalist movement, either believing that his Party's interests would not receive proper protection at the hands of the Police, or spoiling for a bit of a fight, got together about 200 sturdy young men early in the week to guard his house. Two hundred militants guarding the house of a political fire eater were bound to start trouble, and it came. In the clash and the fighting which lasted for an hour or two, students joined the Baroody Guards, while the Police remained neutral, but their neutrality was very benevolent to the other side. The result was discouraging to the Guards.

Declaring that nine hours before the fighting commenced, he had learned that the opposition had concocted a plot (what plot?) with the local authorities, Baroody sought an interview with M. Solomiac. It was refused. Thereafter not a few of the shops closed, and it was only the efforts of their brothers in Aleppo and Homs and Hama that kept the Damascene Nationalists in the arena. They were downhearted and favored withdrawal.

But

But, with whom did the Baroody Guards first come into contact in the affray mentioned? This is the strange part of the story, one that must be put down to the Banderlog theory, or the cleverness of M. Solomiac, or perhaps, to a weariness of the constant preachments by Nationalist leaders of hatred for the French which they are unable to translate into effective physical action. The opponents of the Guards were, for the most part, rebels of 1925-6, individuals who had been deported and later allowed to return, and others who had served prison sentences inflicted by French courts martial, and some ordinary ruffians. Perhaps it may be that these gentlemen have had enough of strife with the Gaul, and believe it easier and more profitable to break the heads of their fellow countrymen. But then, a lot of Monarchists were in the affray against the Baroodys. Are not the Monarchists Nationalists? Do not they all want a Syrian nation, independent in the world? Here was a case of sheer Banderlogism. This particular breed has been unable to retain the great idea it once had of a Syrian nation. It has heard a nut drop, a Feisal or an Ali nut, and its mind has been turned.

In Aleppo, there was a straight fight between the Nationalists and the Police due to the fact that the former held a meeting without obtaining the necessary permit. The Police did not have the grace or the sense (who would expect Police to have?) to permit the meeting to proceed under the exceptional circumstances of the day, and violence resulted, with casualties. But not before a violent anti-French speech had been made by the Aleppo leader, Ibrahim Bey Hannano:

"France

> "France has led us to the last degree of degradation, sucking our blood. In the event of the success of her colonisation program, she will violate our domiciles and our women."

The curious part of it is that some, at least, of the Nationalist leaders talk, in private conversation, of the necessity of collaboration with the French, at any rate for the purpose of protecting the country against the Turk, and the fierce Puritan of the desert, Ibn Seoud. But when it comes to getting votes, anything goes, and there is no restraint in the stirring up of hatred. Women are in danger, even as they are when Christian white men wish to burn negroes. There is nothing new!

To-morrow's balloting will, I believe, be secret. But gendarmes stand in the room where a man marks his ballot and we are in a part of the world where "the principle of authority" is still strong. And passionate appeals are being addressed to all Christians to save their homes and their women, too, by voting against the Nationalists. Twenty-four hours before the balloting, and the situation by no means looks as well for the Nationalists as it did last week. Yet, the bulk of the population is undoubtedly with them, and they may still crash through.

Respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

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One copy to American Embassy, Istanbul.

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AMERICAN CONSULATE - GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA

Telegram Sent

Confirmation - File - Voucher Copy - True Text

800

Secstate

Washington

December 21 - 9:00 p.m. Following disturbances yesterday elections were suspended in Damascus and Hama The casualties were five killed fifty wounded

Goold

December 21, 1931.

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

DESTINATION OF TELEGRAM: Washington, D. C.,
United States of America.

	Secstate - Washington
VEBPY	December 21 - 9 P.M.
GIMER	Following
FOSID	Listed Embassies
IUGIM	yesterday
FUZOF	Electrons
TAFOV	Were
PYLAD	suspended
KUMEK	in Damascus
BUTEB	And
GYVPO	Have
REFAL	The Associated
TAFOV	were
ABAGY	five (5) fri
LIPOM	Killed
ADDIPI	fifty, (50) Jv
IUFIM	wounded
	Good.

In reply refer to
File No. 800
HSG:HT

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 23, 1931.

Mr. Lorenzo Y. Manachy,
Aleppo, Syria.

Sir:

Thank you very much for your letter of December 21st with its enclosures. What I would like most of all would be your appreciation of what occurred, and your idea of what the consequences will be. I do not even know how the balloting came out.

Were there any preparations for the elections such as the registration of voters beforehand?

I realize that perhaps you will not care to say what you think. If that is the case, say so, and I shall understand.

Very respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

A true copy of the signed original

800

In reply refer to
File No. 800
HSG:HT

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 23, 1931.

Mr. Joseph Dabbouss,
Bab Touma, Damascus,
Syria.

800

Sir:

I hope that you have not meant to make me wait until next Monday before giving your report on what occurred last Sunday, and what occurs if the elections are continued today as I heard yesterday they were to be. You are the man on the spot and your observations should be most valuable. I not only want to know what you saw and heard, but I should like to know your appreciation of what occurred and your idea of what the consequences will be.

If the writing of such a letter would embarrass you, say so, and I shall understand.

Very respectfully yours,

H. S. GOOLD

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

A true copy of the signed original

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Nº 111

Aleppo, December 21st, 1931.

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General,

Beirut, Syria.

Subject : "Elections"

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
BEIRUT, SYRIA

SIR:

I have the honor to herein transmit two letters addressed to the American Consulate by Mr. Ibrahim Hanano, the leader of the Nationalist faction in Aleppo, dated the 18th and 20th instant.

Both letters, which were addressed to all the Consulates at Aleppo, deal with the question of the elections and bitterly criticize the pretended partial attitude assumed by the Authorities.

The market is today partially closed in sign of protestation, but the attitude of the population remains pacific.

It is stated that the elections yesterday were conducted normally in the Sandjaks of Alexandretta and Deirezzor.

Herein enclosed a supplement issued today by the "NAHDA", one of the organs of the "Moderates", or the adversaries of the "Nationalists" or "Extremists", which gives which gives a different version of yesterday's elections.

It is rumored that the Government is backing the elections of the "Moderates" at the head of whom seems to be Subhi Bey Baraket, former President of the Syrian Federation, who seems to be now the persona grata of the French Authorities.

I have the honor to be,

SIR,

Very respectfully yours,

Hanauer

LYM/MN.
Encl. 6 pieces.

(Beirut) AS-SAYYAR, December 22, 1931.
(Paper)

It seems that the conflict began at ~~Keimarié~~ Kanawat quarter on account of the failure of the chairman of the committee supervising the elections to observe Art. 32 of ??? which stipulates that two of the people voting should elect from among them two men to join the committee, and that the chairman of the committee should take the box in his hands, and show it to the public to make sure that it contains nothing and to seal it thereafter before the elections should begin.

[redacted] The government had armed the gendarmes, the police, the firemen, municipal police and employees of the "Banderole" service, and had placed the authority in the hands of Wasek Bey El-Mouayad who gave his orders to all those mentioned above to be on the alert and to be prepared for anything that might take place.

The irregularity reported to have taken place in Keymarié quarters was also said to have occurred in Kanawat, Souk Sarouja and most of the other quarters of Damascus. When the people protested and endeavored to oppose this irregularity, the armed government men mentioned above attacked the public and the conflict took place.

Those who were transfered to the hospital exceeded two hundred and it was reported by hospital officials that only seven among them died.

Before noon the tanks of the military forces reached Merjé square and the military forces were scattered there preventing anybody from reaching it. When the French Authorities got the news of the conflict they realized the critical situation and Monsieur Ponsot who was constantly being kept informed over the telephone by Monsieur Solomiac of things taking place in the field, gave his orders to suspend the elections and to withdraw the authority from the hands of Wasek El-Mouayad and to place it in the hands of the military. Nobody was then permitted to have access to the telegraph and post offices, and no telephone or telegraphic communication were permitted between the city and abroad.

About the same thing happened in Hama. There were many wounded and one died. A telegrapm of protest was sent by the people of Hama to Monsieur Solomiac. It seems that the public there boycotted the elections.

At Homs, it is reported that the elections was carried on in a relatively "calm atmosphere", although some disturbances took place due to some irregularities reported to have taken place on the part of the government.

At Aleppo, however, it seems that the public boycotted the elections.

At Douma, near Damascus, due to irregularities on the part of the committee, the public got furious and some young men pulled down the [redacted] roof of the building on the heads of the memebrs of the committee and the box containing the votes.

Form 476.

TRADE OPPORTUNITY.

[To be sent in duplicate. When using this form, consult General Instructions No. 476.]

FROM.....

STATION..... DATE .....

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1. Name of inquirer.....

2. Address of inquirer.....

3. Character of business (wholesaler, retailer, commission merchant, manufacturer, agent):

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4. Cable address.....

5. Telegraphic codes.....

6. Nature of inquiry (purchase of goods or agency).....

7. Quotations (c. i. f. or f. o. b. and what port).....

8. Payment (currency, credit terms, etc.).....

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9. Packing instructions.....

.....

10. Shipping instructions.....

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11. Language.....

12. Articles desired; quality, quantity, etc.....

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CONFIDENTIAL.

13. Financial references.....

.....

.....

14. Comments.....

.....

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, December 22, 1931.

ackd 12/24/31
H.S.G/GT

CONFIDENTIAL.

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Sir:

I have the honor to enclose herewith a report
1/ about the political situation for the period ending Dec. 21, 1931. I could not mak e up my report on Sunday as promised because of the too much exitement found in the city.

I have the honor to be Sir,

always at your service,

very respectfully yours.

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

800
Enclosure.
1/ Political Report.

POLITICAL REPORT
Ten Days ending.
December 21, 1931.

****

CONFIDENTIAL.

Political Groups.

The political groups that are working at present in the political situation in Damascus are;

El-Kitleh Watanieh, f o rmed of the extremist nationalists of the Istiklal party and some persons of the Hezb el Shaab, (People's Party), this group was formed following the elections of 1928, and pretends to represen t the national aspiration calling itself by the Syrian Nationalis ts. This group is republican.

Hezb el Islah, Reform Party, this group is formed of the pro-French class and whose mos t members are officials in the local government, most of its adherent are post seekers on the open. This group can be colore d by any color desired by the French.

El-Osbeh Watanieh, (The National League), this group is recently formed of some moderate nationalists its programme is monarchial.

ElRabitah Watanieh, (The National Tie), this group is formed of the remainder of four old groups, it was recently formed after the rumors of the doublefold crown. It is purely monarchial.

El-Mithakiin, (The national pacters). This group is former of the asiders of Dr. Shabender. This group looks as aspiration on the National pact, it has n o decision for the regime but prefer what is more usefull to its home whether a republic or a monarchy.

Government group, this group is composed of Cheik Taj the ex president and some members of his government, this group is nothing but French employees.

Groups and Elections.

The groups that are on the feild for the elections can be principally divided by two groups;

1. The Nationalists, this group was formed of the Kitleh Watanieh and the Rabitah Watan ieh.

2. The Government gro up, this was formed of some of the Islah party, the governmen t group and the Osbeh Watanieh.

El Mithakiin decided to do not enter the elections.

In a local study I find that each one of this two groups is equivalent to the other in power and therefore the success could not be predicted to a on e of them unless their list of candidates appear to the battl e.

Creation of trouble.

El Kitleh in the begi ning of the period under revision found itself loosing the feild in many quarter of the city begun to create trouble and false rumors that were finding rapid acceptance rspecially in the ears of young men and school boys.

First Real Trouble.

Qanawat Quarter is a quarter inhibited by some members of elKitleh as Fakry Baroudy Zeki Khatib, Mohamed el Nahas etc. and some members of the government group like Ahmed el Hasiby, Shokry Tabaa, Nassib Bakry etc. but is seemed that the group of the government was more powerfull than the Kitleh group in which they have their headquarter in the house of Fakry Baroudy.

On December 10, 1931 the young men of Fakry Baroudy insulted a youngman of the Gov ernment group who went and accused the fact to Abou Shokry Tabaa, this man and two other men came to the house of Fakry Baroudy and made a quarrel there about the agression. Fakry brought a bou t a half dozen of men from Douma and pretended that these are h is quardians.

On December 13, 1931 in the night, some men of those pretended to be guardians of Fakry bey passed in front of some vagabonds of the other group and a quarrel begun between the men of the two groups, in its begining sticks were the arm and in its end revolvers, the people of the government group were stronger than those of the nationalists and did run after then till they hided in the house of Fakry bey and followed them in, police interfered and some were taken to jail. One revelver was caught with the man of Fakry bey.

This was very much enlarged in the morning and the nationalists spread a rumor in the city saying that the men of the government assaultedthe house of Fakry bey el Baroudy and fired on the presence in order to make an age of terror. That this is the begining of the interference of the elections. That the liberty of the electors will be molast e d.

On Dec. 14, 1931 the two large souks of the city closed their business place and two demonstrations made which were disbersed by the police.

Boycotting not boycotting the elections.

On Dec. 16, 1931 a ru mor spread in the city very quickly saying that the nationalists decided not to inter the elections. but in the efternoon Hashem bey Attasy arrived from Homs and a meeting was made and the situa tion was reconsidered and a new decision passed that the Nationalists will enter into the elections.

Exitement.

There was huge exitement in the last four days about the elections, and all this exitement was originating from the nationalist group, here in Damascus the nest of religious fanaticism it is easy to exite the public and turn his imagination into another direction by simply spread of a rumor saying that so and so is helping the French who are the foes of the religion therefore everyone will be against him, people make in the streets demonstrations in which they shout "Din Mhamad din el Sef" (The religion of Mahomed is the religion of the sword) this is suficient to gather into the exitement a nu mber of rioters.

Government List.

There circulated in t he city that the French made a list of candidates whom she wi ll aside by all its force and that Cheik Tajeldin will b e in the head of this list, the public in Damascus at present hate this ex president and all his men especially Wathec be y el Mouayad the Governor of the city. and it seems that the French trusted this cheik again in the management of the operation of elections though he failed completely in 1928. So the circulation of a news of this sort made some alart in the ideas of the public.

The Nationalists.

The nationalists of t he Kitleh Watanieh after a study of the situation found in mun y section of the city that they are week and will not succeed but in order to show that they exist proclaimed to inter in the election, again they reconsidered their situation and found that in case they succeed they go to that as a minority in the assembly all their [illegible] and their paper el Youm that they do int er the elections as a group of opposition. I lerned from one of them who is a leader that their programme consist to inter the elections of the first degree and afterwards rebalance their situation, they have to consider the situation from two points, 1. freedom of the elections and 2, how much they gain of the electors if the elections are free. On this consideration there was circulated in the city that the government will corrupt the elctions and will steal the boxes of baloting. They prepared what to do in the day of elections and as a measure they spread t heir men here and there telling the public to close their shops othewise they will be harmed.

Activities of the Government.

The headquarter of th e direction was in name in the government building but was in fact in the house of Cheik Tajeldin. The sum of 18000 Syrian Pounds was given to Cheik Taj for the purpose of distributing for the gain of electors. The government again made some appropriation that was 5000 Syr, Pounds to be spent officially as expences for the election. The preparation and measure taken by the government was really low and mean, a notable friend of mine was ask ed to be the director of an election department but he refused because he was asked to take some measure against the law of elections and to do put secretly 400 papers voices in the box but he refused afte r the matter was treated to be confidebtial.

December 20th, 1931.

The day of December 20, 1931 was remarkable.

The public was so exi ted and early in the morning there was crowds waiting on the door s of elections departments and as a description I give below eac h department.

Kaymaria Quarter Department. About six o'clock a large crowd was waiting on the door of this department, there was a guard of about 20 policemen and some gendarms as well as some bandrole guard, the baloting box was inside sealed in red wax, about 7 A.M. the two employee came and sat behind the box which was on a table, the crowd asked this officials to begin the operation as per article 32 of arrete no. 1889 which say that two controllers should be elected from the public to watch the operation, one offical replied that no need for that as the government has already elected two persons, then the public asked to see if the box is empty or not as the law say that the baloting box should be opened and shown empty to the public and the two controllers elected, this operation could not be done and was postponed till the director arrives, the public asked again as per article 36, 40 and 45 to elect from the public writers to write for the illetcrates, and to empty the room of armed forces but nothing of that was replied. At about 8 A.M. arrived Cheik Abdulkader el Katib the director of this department this person is one of the Ulema type and is a friend, colaborator with cheik Tajeldin, and one of those who are much disliked by the public. He replied to the many demand made to him to apply the law of elections; that he already applied that and that about 500 persons already arrived and voted then the public protested and said that this is illegal as the elections should begin at 8 and finish at 4, he refused and the public insisted to see there is in the box, then a speaker spoke and told the public that the government already filled the box with votes and therefore no need for the public to vote as this was already dome in the night, the public was exited and a group tried to enter the room and break the box the forces were very carefull in guarding the box a batle took place and sticks were first used then fire arms the batle ended by the retreat of the public with four wounded of whom two were seriously harmed by the bullets of the guard, the cheik director took heels to his home and the public declared boycotting the elections in this department as well as a delagation was formed to see M. Solomiac and report to him the fact this was dome but a certain secretary in the government pretended that M. Solomiac is absent and he will take note of what happened the delation was not satisfied and a demonstration was formed. This was the bigining of the evil in this day. The public of all parties remained boycotting.

Souk Saroudja Quarter Department. What hapened in this department is very identical to what hapended in Kaymaria, three were wounded of whom one was of the government forces. elections were boycotted in this section.

Maidan Quarter department All what was dome in this department was regular and the elections run in order but it was niticed that the governmen t list was loosing and the nationalists were gaining.

Bad el Sarija Quarter. All run in order in this quarter and the government and the nationalist lists were seen of equal forces.

El Shagour Quarter. The baloting box was opened in this quarter before the public and then sealled as per the law but the nationalist elected Lotfy bey elHafar to be a controller but the government refused and said that already two controllerselected. rioters took this occasion and disturbed the order and asearching in the pockets of one of the officials showed hiding about 150 papers votes, the public was e xited and the elections boycotted.

Kanawat Quarter Department. This quarter was regular and balloting box was opened and shown empty before the public and the operation run but the nati onalists had no controllers in this department and the room was full with the armed forces, one of the nationalist leaders Zeki bey el Katib insisted to stay inside and watch the oeration this was oposed but in vain afterwards he was thrown out b y the forces, he and Mohamed el Nahas another nationalists thi s two went out surrounded by a group of rioters and made thei r way to see M. Solomiac but in vain went all their efforts th en Zeki el Khatib made a speaker in the public and begun to exc ite the public therefore I consider that he and Mohamed el Nahas w ere the origin of the bloody demonstrations that took place in the city afterwards.

Mohajerin Quarter dep artment. All run in order the nationalist were a small minor ity in this quarter boycotted in silence.

Salhiyee Quarter department. There were many protests of the nationalists against this department but all run in order from a governmental point of v iew.

Jews Quarter Department. All run in very complete order from a government point of vie w, it was perfect, most of the jews do not know if there or t here is no el ections, the director filled the box as he wished without any disturb. The operation was complete about 9 A.M.

Greek Orthodox department. The box was not opened before the public. It was seen that the candidate of the government Toufik bey Shamieh has in fact a larger number of voters than his adversery Feiz bey el Kho ury the candidate of the nationalist, there was here a quarr el between the asiders of each candidate and bullets were thrown in the air.

Greek Catholic Depart ment. Every thing here was governmental but in spite of that about 400 papers votes were inserted into the box, all run in order.

Kurd Quarter department. Nothing troublesome in this department.

Amara and Akaba quarter Depart ment. All run in this

quarter according to the law and the list of candidates of the nationalists were gaining.

Demonstrations.

Following the shed of blood in two or three quarters of the city many rioters demontr a tions were formed and marched toward the square of the city where the government buildings were. Police forces and the g endarms in vain tried to scater the crowd, who were armed with stone, the police forces used sticks then hot water colored the blue de Matelen but in vain many of the police forces wer e wounded then the gendarm used white arms at last all was in vain and the rioters increased terribly in number to many th ousands, at this moment police forces were ordered to fire on the public this was done but rioters got more and more breve at last the army forces arrived and when the tanks appeared the crowd dispersed leaving on the groundfour dead and about 30 wounded. About 2 P.M. the French ~~Ar~~ Army take charge of the public order and this fact was published in the city. Order thence was restored.

Killed and wounded.

The public lost in the rioters demonstrations to date six killed and about 35 wounded, the public forces lost about 40 wounded.

Elections stopped.

In the first place the elections were boycotted and in the second place the city was in trouble and disorder that ~~xx~~ many go to their houses and h ide this made the H. C. issue an order at 2.P.M. of Dec. 21, 1 931 postponed the elections for further order.

Arrests.

There is about 40 arreste d but none of them is of importance all are young men.

Complete Defeat.

If the French were scheming to gain the elections I would say that it was a complete de feat to them and to those who cooperate with them of the Sy rians. After the riots of Dec. 20, 1931 The nationalists gained an influence which they never had before.

Elections in this District.

I learned that t he lections run in order in Hauran Katana, Zebdani, Nebk, Homs, and other sub districts.

In Douma the same story of Kaymaria department was repeated there, two were woun ded, the public got hold of the box and opened it and did found a large number of false votes. The roof of the election department which is a mosque was demolished by the rioters.

In Deraya, the same story repeated again and two were wounded but the government succeded in restoring order.

In Kuneitra there was protests only.

Result.

The run of stories her e show that the French who are now

now the directer of the situ ation are responsible for the bad scheme placed on the stage, the French are fighting to make a list succeed but this list is hea ded by Cheik Tajeldin and his group that there was misuse of the elections and in fact all was discovered so openly.

Funeral.

There was on Dec. 21, 1931 a huge funeral made by Damascus to those who were killed, there was in the funeral four corps and one of a baby one year old who was killed with his mother while passing a street. About 10 thousands marched in this funeral but all was calm and nothing happend. Some persons spoke very loud and critisiced the French and the mandates and colonization and all foreign efforts to colonize Syria.

Hama.

The situation of Hama in the elections was identical to that of Damascus in every respect. 8 Killed and 10 wounded. The elections were stopped also in this city.

Protests.

Many telegraphic protests were sent to the H.C. about the situation and the electi ons.

Closing of the City.

On Dec. 21, 1931 as w ell as on the 20th the city of Damascus was completely clos ed, no shop could be seen open. this was as a prot est and mourning. Many also closes their shops if they find others closed.

The Situation.

The city is completel y calm, the French Army still occupying the square of the city and the government buildings and the public orde is in the hand of the French.

Prepared.

The run off events in Damascus, Douma and Hama shows that it was prepared beforehand by the nationalists, but the bad scheme followed by the gover nment and the French from behind strengthened the position of the nationalists and rendered all the efforts of creation of parties or groups nil.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.

POLITICAL REPORT
Two Days.
Dec. 22 and 23rd, 1931.

******* **********

Dec. 22, 1931.

The day of Dec. 22, 1931, passed in order no trouble at all. The French soldiers and the black troops still occupying the square of the city.

The Local Government.

There is a rumor in Damascus saying that Wathek bey el Mouayad the governor of the City will be dismissed as well as the Cheif of Police, M. S olomiac went to Beirut to confer with M. Ponsot about the sit uation.

Dec. of 23, 1931.

This day is calm and business movement in the city is as usual The French still have the order of the public security.

Elections.

There is a rumor in the city that tomorrow Dec. 24, the operation of the electio n will be repeated.

Funeral.

On Dec. 23, at noon t here was another funeral of those who were wounded and died, h is name is Munir Araby Katby, a young man of about 18 years old. It was a large funeral attended by many thousands and many spoke of the most deep tune of nationalism and enthusiasm.

Arrests.

There is some new arr ests took place but none yet of the true agitators called leaders is yet arrested.

A judicial counsil.

It is said that there will be formed a legislative council to try those who participated in the riots of Dec. 20.

Joseph Dabbouss.

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, December 24, 1931.

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Dear Sir:

MERRY CHRISTMASS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
******** **********

Allow me to present to your goodself and to the members of your staff my best wishes for a Merry Christmass and a happy New Year, hop ping that the year 1932 will be a year of happiness, prosperity and prograss to you all.

I am Sir;

very respectfully yours.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Damascus, Syria, December 24, 1931.

Rec'd 12/26/31
ASG/AFI

CONFIDENTIAL.

H. S. Goold, Esquire,

American Consul General, Beirut, Syria.

Sir;

I have the honor to refer to your letter dated December 26, 1931, File No . 800, relative to a report about the situation.

In reply thereto I beg to inform you that I mailed yesterday about 5. P.M. an envelope containing two political reports and three other letters, this letter should be in your hands on Dec. 24, 1931 abo ut 9. A.M. The report contained explain the situation in d etail. Please telegraph to me if thi is not received.

I could not mail this report before the 23rd as I learned that there was som e censor as well as I could not speak with you on the phone.

I enclose herewi th a short report on my personal
1/ opinion on the situation, please excuse the tune in which it is wrote.

I think that the re are many points to be explained or you may need some detail on any question therefore I thought to make a trip to Beirut and explain verbally what is not writen. Please tele graph to me the word"Come to Beirut"in case you think that you may need some explaination. I can be in Beirut on Dec. 26, or 28th.

I have the honor to be Sir;

alaways at your service

very respectfully yours.

Dabbouss

Joseph Dabbouss.
Dragoman.

800.
Enclosure;
1/ Report as stated.

The French Diplomacy in Syria.
At the end of year 1931.

*********** ********************

Up to 1928.

Since the French occupation to Syria in 1919 to 1928 I can say that the French are excused if they made some mistakes as this 10 years can be considered as a period of study but after all the experimentsthey made and the study shown on the feild, any mistake commited will be considered as a complete ignorance, as a man who do not learn Syria in 10 years will not learn it in 1000 years.

4 more years.

1928-1931, is another period of sound study and examination or rather a pe riod of charging of a new era which I thought will be an era of prosperity and progress but the down of this are s hown in the day of Dece. 20th, made me beleive that we st ill where we begun to depart, this I can translate as du e to two things only; being 1. either the French are v ery clever and buildschemes to colonize Syria forever, or 2. that they are ignorants and do not know what they are doing.

1. The French know.

If the policy of the French in Syria the country under their mandate, is a domination for ever, then what was shown on the stage on Dec. 20, 1931 is a very good scheme very very well played as to show the Syrians are backward, their government cannot keep the public security, and that modern means of political nature cannaot be preserved by them therefore they are far from independance and their country should be always kept under mandate terms or RATHER transfered into a FRENCH DOMINION, this policy if it is meant then what was and is done by the French is to be labelled with Very Good.

2. The French do not know.

If the French re aly want to apply the terms of mandate and the text of Art. 22 of the League of Nation pact and in the same time safeguard their interest, then the role played on Dec. 20, 1931 is a complete ignorance and is a shame to be made under the guidance of a power known as a first rate power and is the front of the Occidental civilization.

Corruption.

I am convinced personally that there was some corruption in the first degree elections.

Anarchism.

I am also convinced that the nationalists are of the first class anarchists and rioters and that their scheme was to make riots if they find themselves loosing the battle, but what was schemed by the French and their agents helped them

to carry out their propoganda in a succeess. They triumphed gloriosly on Dec. 20, and stopped the elections.

Post Seekers.

I am convinced also that the tune and hymn of the nationalism singed by the newspapers and leaders is nothing but a net to sell more of the papers or to have a post with a large salary. There may be some exceptions of good leaders.

4 Years Government.

The keeping of g overnment of Cheik Tajeldin and his group for four years has increased the jealasy of the other especially in this period of crisis in the economical situatio The experience has showed me that every one who goes to the head of the government will be disliked by the public because of the bad propoga nda worked by those waiting to get up into his place. Therefore the working with Cheik Tajeldin and his group is another bad scheme adopted by the French.

Summary.

The French are stingy and bad diplomate or good diplomate with bad will. If I was the French H.C. in Syria I do this.

I make free elec tions in every respect.

I do not accept on the government list of candidate any weak person who cannot have in possition a numbers of voters.

The council is composed of 69 members and at least I can gain 30 members of c hristians, villagers and bedwins I will do and most propably can gain another 20 members by bribery of posts and Frenc h freindship, I can also gain another ten by a maxima of a gift of $50,000.00 and leave out the remainder 9 to shout a nd sing the way they like. I pass a treaty for 25 years as I want to safeguard the French interest. All this operation costs about the expences of one month of the Army of occupation or some few days of a rebelion. I keep before this people the occidental civilisation in general and the French in special so high and rendered the French reputation infusible in the whole orient.

Otherwise,

from an oriental point of view.

I place in Syria an army of occupation of some 40000 soldiers, well equipped, then any one who oppose the French policy I will make his soul visit China forever and in 1942 the majority o f the Syrians will be French speaking or rather French in every respectl

Joseph Dabbouss.

In reply refer to
File No. 800
HSG:HT

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 26, 1931.

Mr. Joseph Dabbouss,
Bab-Touma, Damascus,
Syria.

Dear Mr. Dabbouss:

Thank you very much for your letters of December 22nd and 24th with which you sent me a very full and interesting account of what occurred in Damascus last Sunday, and of the state of feeling in the city during the following days. I particularly enjoyed your opinion expressed in the enclosure to your letter of the 24th.

I do not think there is any need of your coming to Beirut.

A very happy New Year to you and yours.

Sincerely yours,

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

A true copy of the signed original

NO. 164

My file copy

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

BEIRUT, SYRIA December 26, 1931.

SUBJECT: ON FAIT LES ELECTIONS!

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

At the first degree elections which took place in the State of Syria last Sunday, a sufficient number of electors were chosen to permit of the return, on January 5th, of fifty-seven out of sixty-nine of the deputies of the new chamber. In this process five persons lost their lives and some fifty were wounded, many of them severely. The process was suspended in Damascus and Hama about one o'clock in the afternoon by order of M. Ponsot made over the telephone from the Residency here in Beirut following the receipt of a message from M. Solomiac at Damascus that whereas he could go on with the thing, it would cost some fifty lives by machine gun fire. But M. Ponsot "fait les élections" (which reminds me of a story), and the secondary elections will take place on scheduled time (January 5th) all over the country where electors have already been chosen, while it is also possible that the Damascus and Hama primaries will have been concluded in time to permit of the conduct of the finals at those places on January 5th, too. But this has not yet been decided by the Commissioner.

Now

Now as to the story. Once upon a time a Scottish prelate went to France garbed in the purple cassock of a continental bishop. He took his wife with him, and a pious innkeeper refused to allow her in.

"Mais je suis en vacances", explained the ecclesiastic.

"Il n'y a pas de doute que monseigneur est en vacances", rejoined the innkeeper.

And so when I say that "M. Ponsot fait les élections", there are many who would agree that I had stated a proposition not to be doubted. But these people would print the word "fait" in italics or capitals.

To begin this account, perhaps I should go back to the year 1916 and to the State of California for a case that may help you to understand. You will doubtless recall that during the fall of the year in question, a very important Presidential campaign was pending, and that the Republican candidate visited the State in making his canvass. At one small town, he stayed in the same hotel with the then Republican boss of the State (who was not then quite so regular or respectable), and, due to some inadvertence, did not meet the said boss. Important consequences followed from the failure of these two men to meet.

I believe that the Syrian electoral story begins with the failure of two men to meet, but whereas, in the Californian case, the failure was fortuitous, here, one man actually sought to meet the other without success. The two men to whom I refer are Henri Ponsot and Hashim Bey el Atassi. It was the Syrian who sought the interview and the Frenchman who denied it. Of course what the Syrian sought

was

was probably some assurance which the Frenchman could not give---as to clauses in the treaty which the Frenchman is waiting to present to the new Syrian Government, as to the return of exiles, and electoral reform. An interview would be useless, M. Ponsot probably thought. And so it did not take place. But there followed the Nationalist manifesto which I quoted on Page 5 of my despatch #146 of December 11th, and the even more bitter manifesto issued by Hashim himself, set forth on Page 6 of that despatch. The French resented the tone of both these manifestos.

Now the Mandatories well know that the two most hated men in the State of Syria are the Sheik Tajjedine, former head of the Provisional Government, and Wassek El Moayad, the head of the Police. It would have been a display of the most elementary tact to remove Wassek from his position for the purpose of the conduct of the elections. But--so the theory is developed--resentful of the tone of the manifestos above mentioned, the French left Wassek at the helm. This was a decision fraught with consequences still difficult to measure.

In my despatch #156 of December 19th, I told of the fighting that had occurred during the week before the election. At dawn on the 20th, Damascus was seething with excitement, and the scenes enacted in one district during the morning were repeated all over the city, so there is no need to go into detail, district by district. By six o'clock, a large crowd had assembled before nearly every polling place. When the polls were declared open at eight, certain individuals demanded of those in charge that, in

accordance

accordance with Article 32 of Decree No. 1889, the ballot boxes be displayed EMPTY to the crowd, and that two persons be chosen from the public to watch the operations. These requests were denied, as well as a request, based upon Articles 36, 40 and 45 of the Decree, for the choice, from the public assembled, of persons to write for the illiterates. Arguments on these points degenerated into wrangles and then into fighting. Delegations from the crowds were sent from many of the polling places to see M. Solomiac, but this gentleman was not to be found. Then the fighting became more serious. Polling places were rushed, the mob using fists, hands and sticks, bottles and stones. In many places, the electoral officials fled, but others stood and fired. In one quarter (El Shagour), our Dragoman reports that 150 fake ballots were taken off the person of one of the electoral officials. Toward the middle of the morning, fighting was general throughout the town, the crowds converging from many quarters on the Municipality. Police and gendarmes fought them with the clubs but the mob pressed on, many an officer being badly wounded by stones. At last the square (Merjé) where the Municipality is located was reached and here, to protect that building, the Police fired. Four were killed and thirty wounded. But not even this deterred the crowd, now wild with excitement. Not a window in the Municipality was left intact, and the building would have been rushed (in the hope of finding the hated Wassek el Moayad in his office and despatching him) when suddenly, tanks of the French Army appeared. Here was the touch of a magic wand. Instantly "the tumult and the shouting" died, and the crowd scattered. Then, seeing that the tanks

were

were not really going to fire, it came back again, but never resumed operations. At two o'clock, it was announced that the Army was responsible for the maintenance of order, and at the present writing, Gallic forces are still patrolling the public squares and guarding the public buildings of the city.

On Monday, Damascus was closed in mourning for the dead and as a protest against the occurrences of Sunday. It opened again on Tuesday, and I am told that by Wednesday, an outsider would not have guessed that anything was amiss from the mere appearance of things. But anyone knowing the town would know that it was laboring under a great strain. The funerals of the victims took place on Monday, huge crowds attending, but order was maintained, in spite of the fervent patriotic addresses that were delivered.

I am not as yet in possession of details of what
1/ occurred in Aleppo, but I am enclosing copies of telegrams
2-3/ and letters sent by Ibrahim Hanano, the Nationalist leader, to the League of Nations, the Quai d'Orsay, M. Ponsot and our Aleppo agent. At Hama, there was a great deal of violence resulting in one killing and the wounding of many, and the town was closed in protest as late as Thursday.

It is difficult to say what the effect of all this will be. The services of Wassek El Moayad may be dispensed with but clearly, the French have not solved their Syrian problem. M. Chauvel tells me that although the majority of the electors chosen last Sunday appeared on the "moderate" lists, they are absolutely free to do what they want on the 5th of January, next; that they are bound by no mandate from the

people

people. And while the Barakat list seems to have been chosen in Aleppo, Soubhi Barakat is an independent man, and is not likely to take orders. The martyrdom of the young men and the baby last Sunday may have strengthened the Nationalist cause.

My impression of the whole business is that our good friends, the French, are really not grieving over what occurred. They are feeling the vigor of the prime of life (not the youthful spiritual exuberance of their trans-Alpine neighbor, thank Heaven) and they are not impressed with the idea of pulling up and getting out. Will they not now be in a position to go to Geneva and say, "Look here - these people are not fit to govern themselves. With them elections mean assassinations. Should not the mandate continue?" And if Ibrahim Hanano cries aloud, "Shame, you permitted the perpetration of gross electoral frauds," well - who in Geneva is Ibrahim Hanano?

Respectfully yours,

H. S. Goold,
American Consul General.

Enclosures:

1. Copies of telegrams sent by Mr. Hanano to the League of Nations, the Quai d'Orsay and M. Ponsot, respectively.
2. Copy of letter, dated December 18, from Mr. Hanano to the Consulate's Aleppo agent.
3. Copy of letter, dated December 20, from Mr. Hanano to the Consulate's Aleppo agent.

Distribution:
Original and four copies to the Department.
One copy to the American Embassy, Istanbul.
One copy to the American Embassy, London.
One copy to E.I.C., American Embassy, Paris.

800
HSG:HT

A true copy of the signed original

(Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 164 of H. S. Hoold, American Consul General at Beirut, Syria, dated December 26, 1931, entitled "ON FAIT LES ELECTIONS!")

(CORRECT COPY: HT)

C O P I E

Société Nations

Genève

Conformément votre désir malgré déceptions antérieures avec France participons élections sans garanties parce que France donna parole liberté élections Autorités françaises administrant directement pays déçoivent privent surveillance urnes multiplient arrestations expulsions confiscations journaux interdictions réunions assiègent domiciles Réclamations vaines Vous êtes dernier refuge demandons protection pour petite nation opprimée.

C O P I E

Ministère Affaires Etrangères

Paris

Participons elections sans garanties malgré loi électorale défectueuse uniquement sur parole France liberté élections Mais actes vos représentants directement responsables démontrent que promesse point tenue Expulsions arrestations saisies journaux interdictions réunions refus les autoriser interdictions visites individuelles domiciles candidats menaces sur electeurs augmentent ostensiblement protestations vaines Prière faire assurer parole France.

C O P I E

Excellence Monsieur Ponsot

Beyrouth

Violences liberté élections augmentent Silence votre Excellence nous oblige nous adresser Société Nations et Affaires Etrangères avec copies Consuls.

(Enclosure No. 2 to despatch No. 164 of H. S. Goold, American Consul General at Beirut, Syria, dated December 26, 1931, entitled "ON FAIT LES ELECTIONS!")

(CORRECT COPY: HT)

Alep, le 18 Décembre 1931

A Son Excellence
Monsieur le Consul des Etats-Unis d'Amérique
Alep

J'ai l'honneur, au nom des candidats nationaux d'Alep aux élections présentes, de vous communiquer ci-joint, copie de trois télégrammes respectivement envoyés en date de ce jour, à la Société des Nations, à S.E.M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la République Française, ainsi qu'à S.E.M. Henry Ponsot, Haut-Commissaire de France en Syrie.

Je me permets d'attirer votre particulière attention sur les actes nombreux et manifestes, dont se rendent responsables les agents français à Alep. Ces actes, qui ne tiennent nullement compte de la promesse faite par la France, par l'organe de son représentant en Syrie, à la date du 19 Novembre 1931, sont de nature à rendre illusoire et décevante la liberté des élections.

Veuillez remarquer notamment que cette attitude calculée, ne tend à rien de moins qu'à dresser certaines fractions de la nation syrienne, les unes contre les autres. N'eût été l'esprit de large tolérance dont tout Syrien est animé, des conséquences très regrettables en seraient survenues.

C'est cet état de choses qui m'oblige à m'adresser à vous en votre qualité de représentant d'une Puissance, Membre de la S.D.N.

En vous priant de communiquer à qui de droit les observations que je me suis permis de vous exposer, veuillez croire, Monsieur le Consul, à mes sentiments respectueux.

(Signed) I. Hanano

(Enclosure No. 3 to despatch No. 164 of H. S. Goold, American Consul General at Beirut, Syria, dated December 26, 1931, entitled "ON FAIT LES ELECTIONS!")

(CORRECT COPY: HT)

Alep, le 20 décembre 1931.

Monsieur le Consul,

A la date d'hier j'eus l'honneur de vous communiquer copie du télégramme adressé à la Société des Nations, en protestation contre les agissements des Autorités françaises qui s'annonçaient des plus violents.

Nos appréhensions justifiées par cette attitude provocante se sont réalisées aujourd'hui. Les autorités françaises, malgré la promesse formelle de Monsieur Ponsot, ne crurent point devoir s'astreindre à l'application de la loi électorale promulguée par le Haut-Commissaire en 1928 et maintenue en vigueur par ses déclarations formelles.

Les autorités françaises assumant directement la responsabilité du pouvoir en Syrie, se permirent notamment d'interdire formellement les réunions électorales, de surveiller les domiciles privés des candidats nationalistes pour en interdire l'accès, d'empêcher l'exercice des libertés, même celles maintenues antérieurement à la période électorale.

Ce matin les bureaux de vote furent constitués par nomination de la part des autorités et non point par tirage au sort conformément à la loi; les chefs de ces bureaux furent remplacés par des agents nommés par la Municipalité, elle-même constituée par voie de nomination dans un but électoral quelques jours avant ces élections.

Certaines urnes, notamment celle de Bahsita, furent trouvées déjà pleines avant le vote d'aucun électeur. Certains hommes attachés aux autorités furent admis à y jeter publiquement plusieurs bulletins à la fois ou successivement.

La force armée fut, en violation de la loi électorale, mise au service de la fraude et de la provocation de la population.

En un mot, les libertés publiques et le droit de vote furent affreusement fouillés au pied d'une façon scandaleuse qu'on n'aurait jamais pu deviner.

A la

Monsieur le Consul des Etats-Unis d'Amérique

ALEP

A la suite de cette attitude et du silence absolu de Monsieur Ponsot dont les agents n'ont cessé de multiplier les agissements, nombre de circonscriptions électorales se sont trouvées dans l'obligation de s'abstenir de l'exercice de leur droit de vote pour éviter les effusions de sang.

L'attitude du gouvernement central de Damas fut encore plus grave; elle donna lieu à des luttes sanglantes où trente victimes trouvèrent la mort et cinq cents autres furent blessées.

Sur la demande de nos collègues de Damas et en parfait accord avec eux, nous avons annoncé officiellement au Gouvernement le retrait de nos candidatures.

Le monde entier appréciera le calme avec lequel nous avons répondu aux provocations incessantes de l'autorité, le sacrifice que nous consentîmes en acceptant de participer aux élections malgré l'absence de garanties et malgré les violences qui s'annonçaient aussi ouvertement.

Ayant été vous-même témoin de ces faits, nous vous prions, Monsieur le Consul, d'en faire part à votre Gouvernement en sa qualité de membre de la Société des Nations pour que les difficultés sans nombre et les exactions dont est victime la nation syrienne ne soient pas étouffées dans ce pays.

Nous vous communiquerons plus tard des photographies prises au vif et démontrant certains agissements concrets.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Consul, l'assurance de ma plus haute considération.

Pour les candidats
nationalistes,

IBRAHIM HANANO

(Signed) I. Hanano

Alep, le 18 Décembre 1931

A Son Excellence
Monsieur le Consul des Etats-Unis d'Amérique

Alep

J'ai l'honneur, aunnom des candidats nationaux d'Alep aux élections présentes, de vous communiquer ci-joint, copie de trois télégrammes respectivement envoyés en date de ce jour, à la Société des Nations, à S.E.M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la République Française, ainsi qu'à S.E.M. Henry Ponsot, Haut-Commissaire de France en Syrie.

Je me permets d'attirer votre particulière attention sur les actes nombreux et manifestes, dont se rendent responsables les agents français à Alep. Ces actes, qui ne tiennent nullement compte de la promesse faite par la France, par l'organe de son représentant en Syrie, à la date du 19 Novembre 1931, sont de nature à rendre illusoire et décevante la liberté des élections.

Veuillez remarquer notamment que cette attitude calculée, ne tend à rien de moins qu'à dresser certaines fractions de la nation syrienne, les unes contre les autres. N'eût été l'esprit de large tolérance dont tout Syrien est animé, des conséquences très regrettables en seraient survenues .

C'est cet état de choses qui m'oblige à m'adresser à vous, en votre qualité de représentant d'une Puissance, Membre de la S.D.N.

En vous priant de communiquer à qui de droit les observations que je me suis permis de vous exposer, veuillez croire, Monsieur le Consul, à mes sentiments respectueux.

J. Hanna

C O P I E

Société Nations

Genève

Conformément votre désir malgré déceptions antérieures avec France participons élections sans garanties parce que France donna parole liberté élections Autorités françaises administrant/ directement pays déçoivent privent surveillance urnes multiplient arrestations expulsions confiscations journaux interdictions réunions assiègent domiciles Réclamations vaines Vous êtes dernier refuge demandons protection pour petite nation opprimée.

C O P I E

Excellence Monsieur Ponsot

Beyrouth

Violences liberté élections augmentent Silence votre Excellence nous oblige nous adresser Société Nations et Affaires Etrangères avec copies Consuls.

C O P I E

Ministère Affaires Etrangères

Paris

Participons elections sans garanties malgré loi électorale défectueuse uniquement sur parole France liberté élections Mais actes vos représentants directement responsables démontrent que promesse point terme Expulsions arrestations saisies journaux interdictions réunions refus les autoriser interdictions visites individuelles domiciles candidats menaces sur electeurs augmentent ostensiblement protestations vaines Prière faire assurer parole France.

Alep, le 20 décembre 1731.

Monsieur le Consul,

A la date d'hier j'eus l'honneur de vous communiquer copie du télégramme adressé à la Société des Nations, en protestation contre les agissements des Autorités françaises qui s'annonçaient des plus violents.

Nos appréhensions justfiées par cette attitude provocante se sont réalisées aujourd'hui. Les autorités françaises, malgré la promesse formelle de Monsieur Ponsot, ne crurent point devoir s'astreindre à l'application de la loi électorale promulguée par le Haut-Commissaire en 1928 et maintenue en vigueur par ses déclarations formelles.

Les autorités françaises, assumant directement la responsabilité du pouvoir en Syrie, se permirent notamment d'interdire formellement les réunions électorales, de surveiller les domiciles privés des candidats nationalistes pour en interdire l'accès, d'empêcher l'exercice des libertés, même celles maintenues antérieurement à la période électorale.

Ce matin les bureaux de vote furent constitués par nomination de la part des autorités et non point par tirage au sort conformément à la loi; lès chefs de ces bureaux furent remplacés par des agentsnommés par la Municipalité, elle-même constituée par voie de nomination dans un but électoral quelques jours avant ces élections.

Certaines urnes, notamment celle de Bahsita, furent trouvées déjà pleines avnt le vote d'aucun électeur. Certaines hommes attachés aux autorités furent admis à y jeter publiquement plusieurs bulletins à la fois ou successivement.

La force armée fut, en violation de la loi électorale, mise au service de la fraude et de la provocation de la population.

En un mot, les libertés publiques et le droit de vote furent affreusement fouillés au pied d'une façon scandaleuse qu'on n'aurait jamais pu deviner.

Monsieur le Consul des Etats-Unis d'Amérique

ALEP

A la suite de cette attitude et du silence absolu de Monsieur Ponsot dont les agents n'ont cessé de multipli les agissements, nombre de circonscriptions électorales se sont trouvées dans l'obligation de s'abstenir de l'exercice de leur droit de vote pour éviter les effusions de sang.

L'attitude du gouvernement central de Damas fut encore plus grave; elle donna lieu à des luttes sanglantes où trente victimes trouvèrent la mort et cinq cents autres furent blessées.

Sur la demande de nos collègues de Damas et en parfait accord avec eux, nous avons annoncé officiellement au Gouvernement le retrait de nos candidatures.

Le monde entier appréciera le calme avec lequel nous avons répondu aux provocations incessantes des l'autorité le sacrifice que nous consentîmes en acceptant de partici aux élections malgré l'absence de garanties et malgré les violences qui s'annonçaient aussi [redacted]t.

Ayant été vous-même témoin de ces faits, nous vous prions, Monsieur le Consul, d'en faire part à votre Gouvernement en sa qualité de membre de la Société des Natio pour que les difficultés sans nombre et les exactions dont est victime la Nation syrienne ne soient pas étouffées da ce pays.

Nous vous communiquerons plus tard des photogrphies prises au vif et démontrant certains agissements concrets

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Consul, l'assurance de ma plus haute considération.

Pour les candidats
nationalistes,

IBRAHIM HANANO

I. Hanano

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Nº 115

Aleppo, December 30th, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
JAN
BEIRUT, SYRIA

H. S. Goold, Esquire,
American Consul General,
Beirut, Syria.

Subject : Elections

800

SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the Consulate General's letter dated the 23rd instant, File Nº 800.

The result of the elections was in behalf of the "Moderates" or the friends of the Government.

With reference to the question made in the second paragraph of the Consulate General's letter under reply, I beg to say that it would be impossible to give an accurate answer thereto. The "Extremists" or Nationalists are affirming same, whereas the "Moderates" as well as the official reports denied the imputation and gave assurances that everything was conducted in the most regular and correct manner. Personally I am inclined to believe that without excluding the display of a certain activity on the part of the "Moderates" and their supporters there is anyhow some exaggerations in the reports of the "Extremists".

Anyhow the market remained nearly totally closed from Monday, the 21st, till Sunday, the 27th instant. Since the 28th the shops begun to open partially, and it is rumored that this status will continue till January 5th, 1931, date of the final elections.

During last week several demonstrations were made, particularly during Friday, the 25th instant. After the midday prayer's in the Great Mosque a multitude of several thousand persons, preceeded by a number of women armed with clubs and sticks paraded in the principal streets of the city with hoisted placards on which were written "Down the false elections", - "Long live the National party". The demonstrators could later be dispersed by the military and gendarm forces after having violently shouted and vociferated in front of the houses of the Wali, Soubhi Bey Bereket and other candidates of the Moderate party. Stones were thrown to those houses and glasses of windows were brutally broken. But thanks to the energetic intervention of the government fordes, a greater disaster

could be avoided. It is rumored that some 6 or 8 persons were killed and about 20 or 30 wounded from both sides. Mr. Ricordel, the Chief of the Public Surety, as well as a Spahi were among the wounded.

Some arrestations were effected in the evening of that day, among which were mentioned those of Saadallah Djabri, Djémil Kateragassi, Naaman Wannesse, Michael Mian, Munir el Amadé, all of whom belong to the Nationalist or Extremist faction. It is said that Ibrahim Hanano and Faher Djabri, both Nationalist leaders, were not arrested because they are sick, but that their houses are surrounded by policemen and that they might later be arrested. As to Dr. Abdulrahman Kayali, also one of the Nationalist leaders looked for by the Government, it is stated that he is not visible.

A great excitement is still continuing among the Moslem population, but it is believed that the energetic attitude taken by the Authorities will, probably, prevent the outburst of the new troubles which some presume might occur the day of the final elections which is fixed on January 5th, 1932.

I have the honor to be,

SIR,

Very respectfully yours,

L.YM/MN.

Confidential

AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

Nº 116

Aleppo, December 30th, 1931.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
JAN 2 1932
BEIRUT, SYRIA

H. S. Goold, Esquire

American Consul General

Beirut, Syria.

Subject :

The Situation in Aleppo

SIR:

I have the honor to report that since I wrote my letter Nº 115, of even date, the effervescence in the city has become more acute. Through intimidations made, it is said, by some special emmissaries the market which started to open partially has closed again. It is rumored that some Moslem families are leaving the city, and that the contents of some shops are being removed to some other more sure places. This on account of a fear of an eventual pillage of the city. There is also talk that Arab Tribesmen might make incursion in the city. I have just been informed by a reliable source that letters of threats were addressed to the candidates of the Moderates or Government friends, and that the latter have handed them over to the Public Security Department.

I was also told that some French reinforcement reached last night the city. The general atmosphere gives however the impression that conditions are taking a quite serious "tournure", and that unless the Authorities make proof of a special firmness, coupled with sufficient forces to cope with the grave situation which a wild excitement and unusual antichristian feelings seem to have created, the perpetration of some regretful events is not to be excluded.

Economic conditions in Aleppo, like in other centers in Syria, are not at all satisfactory. Therefore that portion of the population which is suffering under present conditions are likely to welcome and perhaps to provoke trouble to be followed by pillage and probably massacres.

Under these conditions and inasmuch as there are large American interests and a small American colony in this city, I would not hesitate to suggest that the attention of the High Commissary be attracted in view of giving special instructions to the Aleppo Authorities to grant, eventually, all the adequate protection to the American Colony and American interests in Aleppo.

I have the honor to be, SIR,

Very respectfully yours,

LYM/MN.